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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Kristin Mary Agnes Helen Kant

The Graduate School

University of Kentucky

2009

PAINTING THE MOUNTAINS:
AN INVESTIGATION OF TOURIST ART
IN NORTH AMERICA

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

By

Kristin Mary Agnes Helen Kant

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Mary K. Anglin, Professor of Anthropology

Lexington, Kentucky

2009

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

PAINTING THE MOUNTAINS: AN INVESTIGATION OF TOURIST ART IN NORTH AMERICA

This study examines the use of regional cultural icons, like hillbillies, nineteenth century pioneer caricatures, and rural/wilderness landscapes, in paintings from an Appalachian tourist center. These icons, produced by the public media's portrayal of the Appalachian region over several generations, contribute to a sense of cultural difference associated with people of Appalachia. The research question driving this project is: would cultural distinctiveness exist if cultural stereotypes were not a part of the tourist center's local economics, politics, and social life? Building on ideas from consumption studies, this project explores consumption practices of artists and tourists as they interact with icons in art galleries and other commercial spaces located in a popular vacation destination. Artists and tourists both play out the role of consumer because they choose and make use of icons. This project also draws on ethnographies from tourism and tourist art and from theories of ritual and performance studies.

Data gathered from formal interviews, gallery surveys, content analysis of paintings, observations, and participant-observation is analyzed to describe the kinds of images consumed in an Appalachian tourist art market, as well as the marketing techniques employed by business owners to facilitate the tourist's consumption of images, the performative qualities of consumer behavior and gallery spaces, the various meanings signified by images to consumers, and the structural ways individuals are taught to associate certain meanings with images. This project deconstructs notions of cultural distinctiveness associated with the Appalachian region, while showing some cultural icons to be personally important to artists and tourists. Showing how the tourism industry affects cultural perceptions of marginalized groups, this research also reveals the ways dominant cultural assumptions, like racial and class categories as well as experiences with the past, are communicated via art images. Recounting artists' stories of working within a tourism context enables this research to describe how individuals and communities employ sales strategies to minimize their perceptions of economic risks. This project concludes that the perpetual use of stereotypes is motivated by the need for a

tourist setting to seem different and by the values stereotypes bear for consumers' personal identities and preferences.

KEYWORDS: Art, Tourism, Consumption Studies, Appalachia, Stereotypes

Kristin Kant

Student's Signature

June 8, 2009

Date

PAINTING THE MOUNTAINS:
AN INVESTIGATION OF TOURIST ART
IN NORTH AMERICA

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For my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth and Elaine Kant,
because you taught me to be curious.

Homo sum; humani nil a me alienum puto.

-Terrence

(I am a human; and nothing human is of indifference to me.)

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CHAPTER ONE

CREATING A SKETCH: INTRODUCTION



Figure 1.1 At Peace



Figure 1.2 Majestic Mountains

These paintings exemplify the iconography for sale in art galleries in a popular tourist destination located within the Southern Appalachian Mountains of the southeastern United States. The painting in Figure 1.1 is an image of a snowy night scene of a



Figure 1.3 The Good Neighbor

pioneer log cabin and barn. The deer in the foreground captures the viewer's eye and leads the viewer to gaze at the cabin with its lit windows. Smoke rises from the chimney. The moon hangs low in the sky, and the several large trees surrounding the scene suggest remoteness. This painting is a best-selling image. The artist, Lyell Richardson¹, suggests that customers respond well to the painting because his depictions of the cabin, the snow, and the deer convey messages of peacefulness, tranquility, and nostalgia for the past (Fieldnotes). In Figure 1.2, a painting by Joseph Gideon depicts a high vista of the

¹ All place, organization, business, and personal names are pseudonyms.

Southern Appalachian Mountains. Bright colors in the foreground trees indicate the autumn season, which is this region's most congested tourist season. The sunlight plays off of undeveloped mountain peaks. The title of the painting, "Majestic Mountains," communicates to the viewer a sense of magnificence and splendor. Tying the notion of majesty to a visual representation of mountains conveys reverence for nature perceived as unspoiled. Figure 1.3 is a painting portraying an older man who grows pumpkins. He wears overalls, and he sits with his pumpkins in the back of his old pickup truck. A brightly colored tree gives him partial shade, and the viewer can see his aging farmhouse and barn in the background. The elements in this painting by Greg Wright convey nostalgia for rural life to some viewers (Fieldnotes).

The separate images in all of these paintings, the cabin, the deer, the snow, the forest, the mountains, autumn leaves, the farmer, the truck, the farmhouse, and the pumpkin patch could be encoded with a variety of cultural meanings depending upon the viewer. They could also signify a variety of locations throughout the United States. As icons, however, they carry more precise meanings when they are combined into a collection of art pieces available for sale in the specific locale of an Appalachian tourist center. In this context, these icons communicate stereotypes of Appalachian culture and environment that are romanticized and not wholly representative. The danger of such stereotyping is the perpetuation of derogatory and disabling assumptions about the people who live and work in Appalachia.

This dissertation is an ethnography of images and meanings and the people who consume them in a tourism context. This study examines the use of regional cultural icons, like images of hillbillies, nineteenth century pioneer caricatures, and

rural/wilderness landscapes in paintings from an Appalachian tourist center, which I refer to as Mountainville. This research considers “image” to be a visual representation, a picture of a thing, place, or person. The connotation of meanings to images transforms the images into icons. “Icons” may be understood in this project as visual representations or images that carry significance for those people who incorporate such images into their aesthetic experience. Icons are symbolic. What they symbolize depends greatly on the context of their use. Many icons in Mountainville are used to intentionally symbolize stereotypes of mountain culture.

Stereotypes are “parts of social classification systems” which act as collective representations with varying contexts of employment (Chock 1987; Erikson 2003; Smedley 1998; Winkelman 2001). Stereotypes used in tourist spaces are abstractions and not a presentation of lived experience. Moreover, these stereotypes, as icons and as conceptions, may lack reference to real factors of any true cultural distinctiveness. Thus, stereotypes are inaccurate in the popular presentation of people and place they convey.

To attract tourists and their money, cultural attributes of a place and/or of a cultural group are often stereotyped and commodified. The commodification of local people and place involves the packaging of cultural attributes and stereotypes into sellable objects and experiences. The paradox of stereotypes is that in their exaggerations and essentialisms, they articulate normative understandings of a cultural group. Stereotypes contain points of standardization which reflect cultural preferences made manifest in individual behavior and thought (Stewart 1984). They are used to make a cultural group seem different from the mainstream. Stereotypes act to legitimate existing power relations which order and fix “those who are stereotyped...into a marginal position

or subordinate status” (Pickering 2001:5). On the other hand, cultural distinctiveness implies observable and definable patterns of differing behaviors, world views, and values that are normalized, without reflection, and shared by a group. The point in making this clarification between cultural stereotype and cultural distinctiveness is to acknowledge that stereotypes may very well be present within and about a community without the community actually and observably being culturally distinct.

The paintings produced for Mountainville’s art market manifest stereotypes about Appalachia in visual form, although there are some artists who paint subjects, like lighthouses, sailboats, and canals, which would not be considered Appalachian stereotypes. Furthermore, the prevalence of Appalachian cultural stereotypes in marketing schemes and in commercial spaces besides art galleries helps to convey and even manufacture the perceived cultural distinctiveness of Mountainville to its visitors.

Mountainville, a popular tourist destination has 3,500 permanent residents, yet received ten million visitors in 2005. In this project, Mountainville is not considered to be representative of other Appalachian towns because of its unique proximity to a popular national park and its intense tourism industry. Although it shares a regional history of farming and timbering, Mountainville is exclusively a tourist town. Since the national park was established in the 1930s, Mountainville’s economic base and its infrastructure have been oriented towards the tourism industry with jobs in hotel, restaurant, and retail sectors. While Mountainville is the closest town to the national park, it is not the only town that visitors may choose to visit. In competition with at least four other communities, Mountainville city leaders and business owners hope to make Mountainville the preferred choice of tourists who need a place to stay, eat, and shop

while visiting the national park. Because of a concentrated effort to publicize and promote the town as a mountain town, thus connecting to attractions found within the national park, Mountainville is likely to produce stereotypes as cultural commodities. Therefore, Mountainville was selected as my research site in order to maximize my opportunity to see stereotypes in the marketplace.

In addition to numerous hotels, restaurants, gift shops, and attractions (like haunted houses and miniature golf), Mountainville has a large arts and crafts community. Indeed, over one hundred crafters and artists confined to an eight-mile stretch a few miles outside of the downtown area are an attraction the city helps to promote. Additional artists and crafters are located in the three-mile stretch that makes up downtown Mountainville. Such density of artists allowed for the direct observation of stereotypes in image form.

The paintings produced for Mountainville's art market contain icons that portray Appalachia as a homogenous region of poor, white people frozen in the past. Images observed in paintings include log cabins, outhouses, well houses, wood barns with metal roofs, white clapboard farm houses and churches, wildlife, picturesque mountains, and river scenes. These images resonate with regional icons of Appalachia, and within a context of cultural commodification, imply stereotypical assertions of the region's culture. Most of these icons, like a log cabin, are used to symbolize positive stereotypes. For example, an artist might paint a cabin in a way (usually with blooming flowers, laundry hanging out to dry, and deer grazing nearby) that nostalgically characterizes the past as an uncomplicated, trouble-free time. Some icons may be used to denote negative stereotypes, like outhouses symbolizing non-modern, impoverished lifestyles. Paintings

conveying negative stereotypical messages about Appalachia are rarely, if ever, produced by the artists who participated in this project. Because people on vacation want positive experiences, artists tend to avoid using icons in ways that negatively characterize mountain culture. Instead, artists (and other tourist businesspeople) are more likely to use, and thus consume themselves, the same icons that characterize Appalachia according to romanticized perceptions of mountain culture.

The Appalachian region is popularly perceived to be a distinct land set apart from mainstream America by culture, geography, economics, religion, and politics. Many regional scholars (Batteau 1990; Becker 1998; Pudup, Billings, and Waller 1995; and Shapiro 1978), however, have shown how Appalachia, as a regional culture, is a contrived notion. Although the region is internally diverse culturally, socially, and economically, it is often represented wholly by a narrow body of stereotypical images. Stereotypical characteristics of Appalachian people, projected by popular media and disputed by regional scholars, include uneducated, isolated, rural poor, non-industrialized, non-modern, close to the land, poor hygiene, wrecked personal property, racially white, lawless and violent, simple, backwards, fundamental Christian, and fiercely loyal to family and kin.

There are many ways to define Appalachia. I explore the literature discussing the nature of “Appalachia” in Chapter Five. Most commonly, maps of Appalachia are delineated physiographically, socioculturally, politically, or cognitively. In coming to some definitive understanding of the Appalachian region, I recognize that “regions do not have truth, they have only utility” (Raitz and Ulack 1984:9). Given all the work documenting the intellectual history that shows the invention of “Appalachia,” I am not

convinced that it exists in any real form other than as a social construct used to identify oneself and/or others. There is a tangible, geologically-based place that the term “Appalachia” refers to. It lies along the Appalachian mountain chain extending from New York to Georgia. This “place” is mapped along county political lines transcending thirteen states and serves some assemblage of cultural similarity. Yet, people who identify themselves as “Appalachian” may live elsewhere, and people who live in this tangible, geographic place may not identify at all as “Appalachian.” There is disconnect between all of the ways “Appalachia” could be defined.

To reconcile this quandary of term and definition, I emphasize my use of “Appalachia” to mean a social construct shaped by assumptions and generalizations made about the lifeways of people who live in some relationship to the Appalachian Mountains. These assumptions and generalizations have been projected by popular media formats to several generations of American audiences as bona fide accounts of life resulting in the legitimization of the construct of “Appalachia” as an actual place with a unique culture. Even though this dissertation disputes the claim that the cultural aspects of people of Appalachia are different from the cultural aspects that characterize American life, thought, values, and behaviors, it does recognize the power of stereotypes in the perpetuation of Appalachia’s perceived cultural difference.

The research question driving this project is “would perceptions of cultural distinctiveness of Mountainville exist if cultural stereotypes were not a part of Mountainville’s local economics, politics, and social life?” This is a compelling question because of the social, economic, and political ramifications if Mountainville and through extension, “the people of Appalachia,” are constructed as cultural others. A basic

consequence of such cultural othering is the celebration of an incomplete and inaccurate portrayal of people to the point of devaluing their human experience and relinquishing their cultural integrity. To answer this question, I examine the ways consumers interact with and talk about icons in Mountainville, and I interpret from my observations measures of cultural distinctiveness. My project concludes that Appalachia would not be perceived as culturally distinctive if cultural stereotypes were absent from the historical body of American pop-cultural representations and understandings of Appalachia.

To press further, I conclude that Mountainville is not culturally distinct without the presence of cultural stereotypes in local attractions and in local retailers, especially art galleries. Indeed, my conclusions are informed by residents and tourists alike who perceive Mountainville to replicate other tourist destinations in different geographical locales. Indeed, several residents and tourists commented to me that Mountainville was no different in the experience the town offered them than Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

This project explains the role cultural icons have in making a place and a population seem different. Therefore, this project should compel the reader to consider the paradox of cultural familiarity and cultural otherness projected by the tourism industry. Deliberate industry strategies create attractions that would not be typically experienced in a tourist's daily life. These attractions must be different enough from a tourist's daily life to justify travel time and expense. Yet, industry strategies must sustain enough familiarity to a tourist's daily life so that the tourist can anticipate comfortably what will be experienced. Familiarity is mostly expected in accommodations, person-to-person exchanges, and in experiences with local culture that reinforce cultural stereotypes.

This project should also compel the reader to take a critical perspective towards representations of culture. Challenging that which aims to delineate and define a population into a cultural entity leads to a more thorough understanding of the human experience. This project reveals elements of the interaction between artists and tourists as these interactions are structured by a tourist economy, cultural and regional representations, and artistic expressions of identity and experience. Together these elements paint a complicated picture of what it means to be an artist and a tourist in Mountainville.

When I started this project, I expected to find artists who participated in the Mountainville art market only to make a living. I expected to encounter artists who admittedly exploited stereotypes of Appalachia so that their work would sell to tourists. My expectations, however, lacked an understanding of the range of artists' motivations. Several artists are very clear to say they incorporate cultural images that depict Appalachia in romanticized ways. Indeed, this incorporation of cultural images is a calculated strategy employed by artists to make their work sellable. On the other hand, some artists hold the same perceptions of Appalachia that many tourists do. These artists are not being deceived by dominant ideas about Appalachia. Rather, for these artists painting images such as log cabins reflect personal histories, experiences, and preferences that connote value and meaning for these images.

Ignoring the personal values that serve as a motivation for painting the mountains would have been disrespectful to the artists and a disservice to the ethnographic integrity of this project. Thus, I came to understand that questions of authenticity could not be answered easily, nor could "authenticity" be understood as a category of absolutes.

“Authenticity” often refers to claims evaluating the superior condition of things, whether something is original or fake, or how it compares to some desirable quality. Such claims, though, have less to do with the attributes of a thing and more to do with one’s relationship to that thing. In this light, the “authenticity” found in Mountainville paintings refers to the worth, value, or significance determined by individuals encountering the art, whether by creating the art, viewing the art, or purchasing the art. Furthermore, this understanding of authenticity allows this research to observe and think about the relationships artists and tourists have with paintings and the particular icons they contain, instead of focusing on evaluating the paintings themselves.

In an effort to understand the perpetuation of stereotypes, this research explores why and how artists and tourists consider some icons to be worthy. Throughout this project, I assess the meanings of icons as they were expressed to me by project participants. My intent was not to claim if the icons are authentic or not, but to understand the factors that result in participants labeling the icons “authentic.” Participants rarely used the term “authentic” when describing their connection to a painting. Reactions from artists and tourists, like “that painting reminds me of a personal experience..., this painting looks just like what I just visited..., I really love this scene,” were interpreted by me to signify the worth, value, or authenticity held by the participants for the art and the icons it contains (Fieldnotes).

In considering the factors that make icons significant or authentic to project participants, I expected to see evidence of the influence historical and cultural meanings had on the use of particular icons. I did not anticipate the impact participants’ personal experiences and emotions had in making icons special. Thus, my understanding of

“authenticity” expanded from a simple category of absolutes, to a myriad of meanings. Learning how personally valuable images of cabins, churches, mountains, rivers, and trees are to the artists themselves presents a conundrum of authenticity. By conundrum, I am referring to the varying levels of authenticity marked by the values which are placed on paintings. Much of this dissertation is an attempt to extract patterns from the variation of meanings.

In the next chapter, I establish the theoretical foundation for this dissertation from several bodies of literature. This project draws on ideas from consumption studies, ethnographies about tourist art, and theories about ritual and performance. Topics from each of these areas set the stage for understanding and appreciating the conundrum of authenticity.

From the literature on consumption studies, I present perspectives that see consumption as a process which positions individuals into a structure of roles with mediating interests. I also present work from this literature that describes the creative capacity of consumption. This work helps to explain how different meanings can be attached to art images throughout the consumption process by consumers. This literature also contributes the insight that both artists and art buyers take on the role of consumer of cultural icons. My discussion then turns to tourist art studies from which I examine the influence of the tourism industry on cultural performance and cultural objects. I then outline the conundrum of authenticity and focus on the contradictory meanings and values attached to images depicted in paintings. Theories from ritual and performance studies are relevant in understanding how experiences with art in tourism destinations are ordered and systematized. This literature is also used to discuss the reproduction and

enculturation of meanings and values attached to cultural symbols found in art images.

In Chapter Three, I introduce this project's field site, Mountainville. I outline the town's history, provide census data, and describe the tourism industry that dominates its economic, political, and social arenas. Research methodologies used in this research are detailed, and types of data gathered by this project are defined.

The voices of artists and gallery owners are presented in Chapter Four and raise issues regarding human agency. These stories, compiled from interview data, provide the opportunity to learn about the struggles and the satisfactions experienced by artists and gallery owners as they try to sell paintings in a tourist market. Through discussions concerning sales, artists and gallery owners identified a myriad of strategies and tactics that they considered in order to sell paintings. Comparisons among these narratives reveal ethnographic evidence of the conundrum of authenticity as artists and gallery owners share how they select images to exhibit in their galleries, citing that some images gratify them while others are exhibited for their sales value only.

The main goal in Chapter Five is to provide a detailed description of the images catalogued in Mountainville galleries. The chapter begins with a discussion of work from North American and Appalachian Studies scholars who deconstruct social categories in order to expose the complexity and variation of cultural identities in these cultural areas. This discussion provides a backdrop to considering the range of meanings attached to cultural icons. In addition to the actual images, conceptualizations of Appalachian stereotypes held by artists and tourists are also described. These descriptions help to establish a body of stereotypes and images/visualizations associated with Appalachian culture. The range of motivations reported by buyers for their purchases is examined.

Class backgrounds and emotionally-charged responses to art work are considered as probable causes for the propensity of conventional Appalachian images in paintings.

In Chapter Six, I present field observations and survey data of how icons are used to market Mountainville as a place of cultural difference to attract tourists. Once tourists arrive in Mountainville, icons found in signage, architecture, window displays, etc., help to guide tourists' experiences. Field data also shows how icons are used to stimulate emotional responses in viewers and/or connect to their class backgrounds so that the sales of art pieces might be complete.

Moving from a discussion on the use of icons in a tourism market, this project turns to focus on the ways artists and gallery owners minimize their perceptions of economic risk and uncertainty in a tourism market. Chapter Seven begins with brief sketches of a history of the Western art market and of contributions from economic anthropology discourse which serve to contextualize this project's findings regarding the practices of art business owners. A range of strategies, including media advertisements, product development, and pricing were gathered from interview data and are described throughout the rest of the chapter.

Many art business owners utilize strategies that liken to performances and to the staging of gallery space. Chapter Eight presents these strategies in detailed accounts drawn from my experience as an art salesperson and from interview data. Ideas about performances emerged as I observed that the interactions between gallery workers and gallery visitors were repetitive and consistent across many gallery settings. The purpose of these performances is to make sales by engaging the gallery visitor with the art and/or to creating an emotional attachment to the art.

Chapter Nine ties the chapters together in conclusion, and connects theory, methodology, field site, participants, iconography, meanings, consumption, functionality, agency, economic uncertainty, business strategies, personal identities, ritual, performance, and the ordering of space in order to see the impact tourism has on the art produced for an Appalachian tourism destination. The process of creating art and purchasing art in a tourism context is shaped by the proliferation of stereotypes and by consumers' (artists and tourists) attachments to personal, cultural, emotional, and experiential meanings stereotypical icons embody. Not only is the content of art (paintings) influenced, the exhibition of art, the experience of art, the consideration and evaluation of art, and the purchase of art are affected by the illusion of Mountainville's cultural difference.

This project, at a very basic level, looks at Appalachian stereotypes in souvenir art. The story I tell in this dissertation, however, frames the complexities in the production and consumption of art objects in a tourist market. These complexities are compounded by a palette of personal experiences, social backgrounds, structural forces of the market, regional identity, and tastes and preferences of the people, who create, exhibit, encounter, engage, and consume paintings in a tourist destination in the Appalachian Mountains of North America.

CHAPTER TWO

GATHERING THE BRUSHES AND PAINTS: SELECTING THE THEORETICAL TOOLS

We carry art [in this gallery] that depicts what people came to this area to see- mountains, rivers, trees, buildings, old ways of life.

-Joanna Hitch, gallery owner and manager

When I talked to Joanna (who is introduced thoroughly in Chapter Four) about the kinds of painting subjects she and her business partner select to sell in their gallery, she described how her gallery visitors prefer “romantically realistic” images of natural and cultural attractions seen locally. Thus, Joanna’s gallery only carries paintings from artists who produce nostalgic and idealized images of mountains, trees, cabins, churches, and barns. Joanna’s gallery stock is defined by the consuming tastes of gallery visitors. Moreover, the artists exhibited in Joanna’s gallery are consumers, too, as they value, believe, and select to paint the same images that tourist consumers choose to purchase and possess. The paintings exhibited by Joanna’s gallery are very similar in style and subject to the majority of the paintings for sale in Mountainville.

In another gallery, owned by artist Van Headrick, images of mountains, rivers, trees, flowers, black bears, and pioneer cabins fill the walls. Van exhibits only his paintings and prints. He grew up in Mountainville and claims an Appalachian cultural identity. Van says, “I am two generations away from a dirt floor...my grandparents lived in a log cabin and...never had indoor facility. They had their little outhouse and to me...that’s just Appalachian in its very root” (Interview VH). Van went on to describe how he uses his Appalachian heritage in his art. He paints images of things and landscapes that connect to his experiences with his grandparents. These experiences help to formulate his understanding of Appalachian culture.

Although Van's experiences may be specific to his life, his perception of Appalachian culture is set against a wider cultural backdrop that has narrowly associated Appalachia with images of mountains, cabins, wildlife, and a pioneer lifestyle. This backdrop influences Van's perception of Appalachia whether he acknowledges it or not. Furthermore, this larger cultural context positions Van as a consumer of the constructed icons of Appalachia. Van plays out his consumer role every time he selects to paint mountains, trees, rivers, cabins, barns, churches, wild flowers, and black bears. He chooses these icons, not just because he loves to paint them, but precisely because these icons have become normalized and appropriate to exist in visual representations of Appalachia. Van shares the consumer role with tourists who purchase his work. Tourists act as consumers not only when they buy art, but also when they reinforce, usually by verbal comments, the beauty of, their personal connection to, and/or the quality of the art piece. That artists and tourists both act as consumers of the same body of images makes a sufficient case for this project's use of the consumption model as its theoretical framework.

The purposes of this chapter are to articulate the theoretical framework that structures my research questions, methodology, and findings, as well as to situate my research within the multiple bodies of literature concerned with consumption studies, tourist arts, and ritual/ performance. There are, however, other bodies of literature contributing to this dissertation. Throughout these chapters, I draw on discussions from political economy, class, globalization, The Frankfurt School, symbolic anthropology, identity, the anthropology of risk and economic uncertainty, the economics of space, the

anthropology of emotion, the anthropology of art, art history, ethnography of North America, and Appalachian Studies.

This chapter reviews literature from consumption studies that address the processes and creative capacity of consumption. Acknowledging the capacity to assign and reassign objects with meanings during consumption practices leads to a discussion of authenticity present in tourist art. Literature examining the authenticity of tourist arts recognizes the conflicting values between the representations of culture and personal meanings towards such representations.

This chapter then introduces the conundrum of authenticity within the context of tourist arts and describes the kinds of meaning assigned to and experienced through art made for Mountainville's tourist art market. Because questions of authenticity imply that tourists and artists engage emotionally and experientially with meanings and symbols, this chapter turns to review literature about ritual. The discourse on ritual becomes pertinent in order to see how meanings and images and symbols are structurally experienced and reproduced emotionally by the ordering of space and narration within galleries.

Consumption Studies

The units of analysis of this project are paintings. Particularly, this project is concerned with the perceptions and behaviors expressed through paintings by artists and tourists. During the creation, reception, and purchasing processes, paintings depicting Appalachian icons act as a vehicle for expression of human culture. Consumption of Appalachian images and their associated meanings is at play in all stages of a painting's relationship to artists and to tourists with the market.

The relationship between humans and objects is a long-standing, yet changing one. Humans order objects according to ways that make sense to them (Douglas 1966). Before the rise of global commercialism, objects were often assigned meanings at the moment of their production or distribution (Carrier 1990). As the market expanded in the 17th and 18th centuries, more and more objects became available to consumers. With increasing choices of commodities coupled with the propensity to make sense of these objects acquired as commodities, the locus of appropriation, or the making of meaning, occurred more and more during consumption, especially in industrial societies. Therefore, consumption is not an “autonomous social phenomenon,” but situated in a social context with relations to wider cultural strategies (Friedman 1994:1).

Many disciplines approach the study of consumption with varying pursuits. Hence the entire body of literature on consumption is diverse and contains competing perspectives. Consumption studies have traditionally focused on people’s relationship to objects they obtain in the market. Increasing interest in consumption expanded the literature into a vast body of work which includes theoretical histories of consumption as a structural condition, debates on the morality of consumption, examination of the connection of consumption to commerce and to production, and studies of consumers acting in the market (Miller 2001). Despite this wide scope of inquiry, consumption “is fundamentally about the mediation of things in relationships between people and the role of commerce in that mediation” (Miller 2001a:3). Anthropology contributes to consumption studies by offering a cultural lens on the use of commodities, the restructuring of local markets, and the formation of the consumer as mass consumption throughout the world rises (Appadurai 1992; Friedman 1994; Miller 2001:3; Wilk 1994).

This project on tourist art in Mountainville uses McCracken's definition for consumption as "the processes by which consumer goods and services are created, bought, and used" (McCracken 1988:139). Focusing on the processes of the consumption of art enables me to consider the various roles and perspectives individuals hold within the economic, symbolic, and social structures engaged in Mountainville. Specifically, a consumption model sheds light on the motivations of artists to produce paintings, the techniques artists use to market their art to tourists, the reactions tourists experience when they view paintings, and the tourists' basis for deciding to purchase art. This project does not really focus on how tourists use their purchased paintings once they bring them home. I assume that most tourists who purchase paintings in Mountainville will use the commodities to decorate their homes or offices, displaying visually that which is meaningful to them. There are some tourists observed by this project who use purchased paintings as gifts to friends and family, but most use paintings as souvenirs. Thus, the processes involved in the making and buying of the paintings is of highest interest in this project.

My attempt to understand why images are repeatedly placed in paintings and purchased is helped by a consumption model. From this approach, I examine the social structures that enable the creative capacity in artists and tourists for the attachment of meaning and assertion of identity. Applicable points from within the consumption discourse are 1) that consumption reflects social patterning, 2) that consumption is creative, and 3) that consumption recontextualizes commodities according to consumers' meanings and identities.

A basic assertion within the consumption discourse is that goods communicate cultural meaning and act as a system of signs and ideas (Douglas and Isherwood 1978). According to McCracken (1988), goods are linked by a commonality and an internal consistency that reflects cultural meaning as constructed by a cultural world and that resides in the individual consumer. Presumably then, consumption practices enable the reading of society through the cultural and social patterning of goods (Miller 2001). Taking this perspective one step further, Bourdieu (1984) sees consumption practices reflecting the patterning of class structures and expressing class distinctions. Concerned with more than expressions of individual tastes, this project echoes this theme of the structural connection to consumption practices. This project, however, differs from Bourdieu's emphasis on class based consumption patterns. Instead, patterns of consumption of Appalachian icons seem to be influenced more by the experiences and feelings of consumers, which are not necessarily attributed to any particular class position. These sentiments actually establish the cultural logic of taste for Mountainville tourists instead of the formal education of art and design, or lack thereof, which an economic-based class inquiry might expect.

Consumption studies from a morality approach often examine the relationship between the use of goods and the use of resources in order to characterize consumption as a form of greed and hedonism. This perspective rests on the juxtaposition between production as a creative force which manufactures the value towards an object and consumption as the destruction of the object (Miller 2001). This perspective, however, fails to recognize the creative value of consumption as consumers make meaning in their world. Consumers assert their identities, desires, and preferences while they purchase and

use commodities. Mary Douglas (1992), on the question of why people want goods, explains that consumption holds the capacity for people to make sense of things. Because people are rational beings, according to Douglas, they make decisions to select objects that express something about themselves to others. In turn, they receive messages about others in the same object-based way.

When a consumer selects a commodity, he/she is alienated from the context of production of that object and from that object as well. Miller (2001) identifies this as a loss of authenticity because the consumer is not connected to the object or the mode of production. The consumer may have no idea about the object's context of origin or distribution. He/she may have no clue about the maker of the object, and no significance for the object itself. Consumers may approach commodities with meanings and values informed by advertisers and retailers, but these meanings are not activated until the purchase is made. Belk explains that the possession of a commodity acts as an extension of self (Belk 1988). Only after purchase, in the process of usage, does the consumer recontextualize and reconnote the object with specific meaning and value (Miller 1987:289-290). Carrier (1990) notes that symbolic meaning is not applied or associated equally to all objects and that appropriation in kind and degree varies. These perspectives reflect consumers as rational agents operating within consumption to appropriate consistent meaning to objects and to self.

The capacity for creativity that consumption offers was evident during the conversations I observed between artists and tourists in Mountainville galleries (Fieldnotes). I suggest, however, that the potential for possession or one's ability to imagine owning a painting provides enough of a capacity to express one's meanings,

values, and tastes. Once a tourist steps up to a painting, the artist (or gallery worker) very often begins to express what the painting means to him/her. Sometimes, the artist is asked by the tourist to explain his/her work. This act of explanation reflects the cultural belief that an art work is subjective and warrants a description of the artist's intent. The artist shares why he/she chose to paint the subject, how he/she used the paints and brushes, and what messages he/she hope to convey in the piece. In turn, the tourist gives his/her opinion of the work, albeit in various and sometimes subtle tones. Again, this act of expression on the part of the tourist reflects cultural values for the subjective nature of art and the legitimacy of the viewer's interpretation. If the tourist liked the painting a great deal, he/she normally shared his/her affection enthusiastically and immediately. Most frequently, patterns of affection for the painting were based on emotional and personal experiences as well as viewers' judgments on the conventionality of the painting's design elements. If the tourist did not like the painting, his/her sentiments were equally expressed by indifferent facial gestures and accenting "hmphs!" Moreover, tourists and artists express their individual relationships to and identification to Appalachian culture by the kinds of icons they consume in paintings.

Having established that consumption reflects cultural patterns through its capacity for creative expression, how consumption is shaped becomes the next link in this theoretical model. Friedman (1994) investigates the motivation behind consumer behavior, particularly noting that utility of an object does not necessarily dictate its consumability. Indeed, a range of factors including emotion and identity affect the what, where, when, why, and how people consume. Friedman's argument is based on Baudrillard's commodity worlds and Bourdieu's work on the relations between class and

consumption. The latter is particularly important for Friedman because Bourdieu's theories help to understand the relationship between social context, the formation of the person, and the practice of consumption which constructs a life world.

Consumption not only distinguishes one from others, it reiterates identity of self to self. Friedman says, "consumption for the presentation of self has the self as a primary audience in modern times" (Friedman 1994:10). Moreover, consumption is generated by a certain kind of selfhood which has been produced by social context and personal experience. In a Western cultural context, the act of consuming in order to collect things reflects the notion of self as a possessive agent. This insight leads to the notion that people are culturally constructed to be consumers while at the same time expressing as consumers their individual tastes and desires. This helps to focus attention on the range of perceptions and values that factor into a social group's consumption practices.

In describing how collectors collect, Clifford suggests the collector learns to classify and collect because his/her possessive self "cannot have it all" (Clifford 1988: 218). In denoting what materials groups and individuals choose to preserve, value, and exchange, the culturally constructed subjectivities and institutional practices at work in the appropriation of objects may be seen. Friedman (1994) echoes this idea about possessiveness with his idea of person as a consumer who also creates a process of selection in which cultural items are categorized according to their perceived degrees of authenticity and value.

According to McCracken, consumer goods "are not shackles but instruments of the self" (McCracken 2005:4). Indeed, Belk suggests that whether we know it or not, we "regard possessions as parts of ourselves" (Belk 1988:139). Echoing Friedman,

McCracken says that the consumer is supplied cultural materials from the consumer system to express what it means to be him/herself- depending on the social categories with which the consumer identifies. McCracken explains, “cultural notions are concretized in goods...Through their possession and use, the individual realizes the notions in his [/her] own life” (McCracken 1988:88). The basic tenet of these points is that culture conditions consumption. Culture has normalized the act of consumption of goods, services, and ideas; culture has normalized the person as a consumer; culture has normalized things as commodity objects; culture has also normalized the expression of one’s personal experience and personal tastes through objects to another individual.

The view that culture shapes and normalizes consumption begs the question of the amount of human agency evoked. Simply asked, to what degree and in what context do consumers act on their human agency? This project takes the perspective that consumers, who are both artists and tourists, evoke their agency in varying degrees when selecting images that adequately convey their personal values, tastes, and perspectives.

Lofgren (1994) responds to the discourse of consumption studies that has at one extreme focused on consumers as pawns of market forces and on the other extreme viewed consumers as free agents who are able to express their personal creativity and self identity. Lofgren solicits an understanding between these two extremes that considers consumers as actors with varying degrees of agency of choice. To consumers as cultural constructions, Lofgren contributes an understanding of people in the role of consumers who undergo the process of learning to consume. Regarding the expressed unique and personal meanings embedded in objects, Lofgren relies on Igor Kopytoff’s (1992) process of singularization through which a consumer assigns personal meanings to, feels

a personal relationship with, or personalizes a commodity. Lofgren also portrays the world of consumption as complex and including factors of class, gender, generation, and race. Such personal and demographic forces shape the behavior in object exchanges.

In a review essay on consumption, Blim discusses how a concentration on consumption might reshape perspectives on capitalism (Blim 2000:26). Consumption behaviors place demands on production supplies and commodity forms. Blim suggests that consumption patterns have a role in the creation of new class and status structures (2000:34). In describing consumption's relationship to political economy, Carrier and Heyman set out a few premises on which a contemporary model of consumption is based. To begin with, people are constrained in their use and response to objects and meanings. In turn, the ways people respond and use meanings have social, material, and cultural consequences (Carrier and Heyman 1997: 361). Based on Hegel's idea of objectification, Carrier and Heyman suggest that people realize themselves in the objects they consume. People are constituted by what they consume in an effort to improve or maintain one's location in society. Goods become more than signs of identity and taste. They exist in social, political, and economic processes indicating the production and reproduction of class and status (Carrier and Heyman 1997:363, 369-370). Blim's perspective and Carrier and Heyman's formation advance the argument for an integration of political economy and symbolic anthropology- which have traditionally been separately concerned with cultural meanings and structures. Whatever meaningful connections to objects and services motivating consumers are, they are structured by class and status. In turn, whatever class and status (among other social differences) constrain consumer behavior are manifest in meanings of objects and services.

Tourist Arts

Turning now to the consumption practices in tourism, an industry where production by artists is often the focus of research, some scholars have made the call to study the impact of the experience, agendas, knowledge, and demands of tourists on tourist trade (Edensor 1998; Jansen-Verbeke 1997; Prentice 1997). This project answers this call and examines the consumption of tourist arts by both tourists and artists. Tourist art objects are embedded in constant flows of representations and identities as they move from the possession of the artist, to the distributor, to the viewer, to the patron. Few studies of tourist art have insightfully portrayed this process of meaning formation as it articulates with representation of the local and identity of the tourist (Graburn 1969; 1970; 1976; 1999; Myers 1995; Steiner 1995; Teague 1997). The emphasis on understanding consumer demands is critical to understanding why some stereotypes are preferred while other images of place are excluded from the body of appropriate tourist art symbols. A focus on the consumer, identified as both artists and tourist, is a major contribution of this project.

Ethnographic studies about global tourism have focused predominantly on flows of Western tourists to non-Western places where cultural differences are a common attraction (Abram, Waldren, and Macleod 1997; Gmelch 2004; Smith 1989; Wallace 2005). Studies of tourist arts on the global level have followed this same perspective and are mostly devoid of examples of tourist art sold within Western markets that essentialize Western cultures (See Grayburn 1976 and Phillips and Steiner 1999 for edited volumes of non-Western tourist arts). My project offers a perspective on the flow of Western tourists

to a Western place contributing a locally grounded ethnographic study of tourist art production and consumption in North America.

Tourist art studies focused primarily on non-Western arts, often deal with arts once considered “primitive” or “folk.” The art medium this project examines may not be considered folk art because the majority of actual paintings are produced commercially in large quantities as prints, although each art object is perceived to embody the individual artist. But more significantly, Appalachian regional tourism is an example of Western tourists visiting Western culture. This project differs from other studies of tourist art because of the high probability that the research populations have been enculturated into the same understanding of cultural codes of aesthetics and patterns of economic exchange. There also exists a shared understanding of the art object to function as an object of display. Thus, the cultural disconnect that might occur when a ritual object becomes display art- a functional shift which often occurs in non-Western tourist sites (Graburn 1976, Hart 1995, Layton 1991, Myers 2001, Steiner 1995)- is greatly reduced. In light of this, without the construction of regional tourist sites as places of cultural difference, tourists’ exotification of local people in North America might be minimal.

This project utilizes a sociocultural approach to understanding the production and consumption uses of tourist imagery (Blim 2000; Carrier and Heyman 1997; Chambers 2000; Friedman 1994; Kopytoff 1992; Lofgren 1994; Roseberry 1997; Ruby 1995; Wolff and Resnick 1987). Such an approach views production and consumption of tourist art as social processes that reflect cultural tastes and preferences, class positions, and identities of both artists and tourists. Therefore, tourist art can be viewed as objects of material

culture in and through which the interplay of cultural ideology and cultural structures can be examined.

By examining how and why stereotypical images of Appalachian culture are meaningful to painters and to tourists in Southern Appalachia, this project implicates the processes of cultural communication and identity formation that underlie the tourism industry's use of cultural perceptions and images as appropriate commodities. Examining this communication process provides insight into the consumption and endurance of cultural ideas which occur within other cultural processes like identity formation, social movements, during acculturation, and in the event of cultural change. This project reveals the ways hegemonic cultural assumptions are communicated via consumption of art images.

This project explores the commercial process of image formation (Gartner 1997) that results in shared and commodified cultural perceptions of place as well as in the process of identity formation within individual artists and tourists. Indeed, if artists and tourists place value on the cultural stereotypes of Appalachia, leading to the employment of such symbols in art and the consumption of such art, then the reasons for the persistence of cultural stereotypes may be explained as purely symbolic. On the other hand, if cultural symbols are perceived by artists as the only appropriate forms of cultural representation of Appalachia, or at least only those forms that artists believe tourists want, then reasons for the persistence of these images may be more structurally oriented. Phillips and Steiner (1999:19) state that touristic artists are entangled in economic systems. Therefore, the meanings of art objects may be determined less by the artist's

aesthetics and more by the economic significance placed on the art object by the process of collection through consumption.

The literature reporting the research of tourist arts in non-Western tourist destinations demonstrates that the consumer culture of the U.S. has had a major influence in the formation of political and economic structures leading to the commodification of non-Western cultures (Phillips and Steiner 1999:3). Of course, cultures are not commodified by themselves. Cultures are objectified and sold by tourism industry developers and producers whose actions affect the consumers' perceptions of the cultures they represent. These developers and producers are cultural brokers as they negotiate the fabrication and reception of a cultural group's representation. Tourism in destinations perceived as exotic and culturally different offers pre-dominantly Western travelers an experience which is a contrived version of the host culture. These experiences are based upon the perceived otherness of that culture, which are embodied by the consuming interests of the tourists and the cultural brokers in the host culture (Edensor 1998). In turn, cultural objects offer not just an experience of culture, but the opportunity for someone to buy a piece of that culture- a possession of that culture different from that of the consumer. In this process, the artifact or art object becomes a commodity (Phillips and Steiner 1999:3) based on the desire for objects tourists believe to be representative of the visited culture (Silverman 1999).

By examining the use of cultural images in paintings produced for a tourist market, this project articulates global processes of cultural commodification found in tourist arts to the local activities of artists and tourists in a Western society. This project also addresses the debate between globalization as an agent of cultural homogenization

and globalization as an agent of cultural difference. Inda and Rosaldo (2002) cite Latouche (1996) and Tomlinson (1991, 1999) as major contributors to the visioning of global homogenization. As the world experiences the increasing interconnectedness and flow of globalization, cultural change is directed towards a Westernization of political, economic, social, and cultural structures. Ritzer (2008) contributes the paradigm of McDonaldization suggesting that through global relations societies become fast-paced, predictable, highly efficient, and decreasingly creative, mimicking a fast-food restaurant model of cultural homogeneity.

I argue that the homogenizing interconnectedness of globalization is complicated by evidence of people and places at the local level who undergo a process of commodification which describes the local as culturally distinct. My argument is supported by claims about the disjunctures of globalization from Appadurai (1990), about the uncertainties in the transnational flow of meaning from Hannerz (1989), and about the complex dynamics of globalization created by multi-directional relationships and non-Western cultural contexts as described by Inda and Rosaldo (2002) and Lewellen (2002). At root is the understanding that despite the bridging of space and time that the interconnectedness of globalization brings, structural processes of human cultures are far too complex, too disorganized, and too susceptible to indigenization for totalized homogenization of culture to occur. In other words, cultural difference is and will be represented in an interconnected world.

Case studies of cultural changes brought on by globalization and reconfigured locally are succinctly described in Spindler and Stockard's (2007) edited volume. Smith and Ward (2000) provide an edited volume of examples of indigenous populations who

assert their identities and cultural values and maintain control of cultural property within the interconnectedness brought on by globalization. From this same volume, Layton (2000) ethnographically demonstrates how ethnic identity, defined by global relationships of colonization, gave rise to perceivably new forms of art, as in the case of Australian Aboriginal paintings entering the Western art market. Morphy (2000), building on Layton's argument, shows how ethnically identified art enables people to assert their autonomy and agency in postcolonial contexts. My field site is not affected by colonialism or postcolonialism, yet it has been commodified as a site of geographical and cultural difference. My project proposes that within the tourism industry, as an extension of the flows of people and goods of globalization, art with stereotypic content serves to commodify and assert the perceived uniqueness of the behavior, values, beliefs, and material culture of a place and people, thereby making the place and its people an attractive destination for tourists.

This same consumption process has commodified Appalachian stereotypes in Mountainville. In this project's field site, names of hotels, restaurants, and attractions, like Hillbilly Golf, Black Bear Jamboree, Elwood Smooch's Ole Mountain Hoedown, show that the Appalachian culture, albeit essentialized into observable icons, is available for purchase. Moreover, handi-crafts are common, appropriate commodities that function as a souvenir with a household utility. Taking a structuralist approach, touristic art studies show that artists are deeply enmeshed in economic systems (Phillips and Steiner 1999:19; Prentice 1997). Indeed, Becker's work on the Southern Appalachian textile industry show how American middle-class consumer tastes fostered the demand of handi-crafts that were simple in design, hand-made, and seemingly reflective of an American folk (Becker

1998). Becker's project points to the kind of consumption demands that empowered the production of same and redundant forms of art objects. Although such forms draw criticism from cultural commentators concerned about authenticity of the object itself, consumers are able to express meanings authentic to them- what is of value to them- through the purchase of handi-craft objects².

MacCannell in his widely cited book, The Tourist, states that for tourists from modernized societies, authenticity of cultural forms, often in the form of art, can be consumed in historical time periods and in cultures perceived to be less modernized, more pure and simple, and more attached to nature or less civilized (MacCannell 1976:3). Building on Goffman (1959), MacCannell asserts that authenticity measuring the cultural representativeness of a thing or an event is staged in tourist spaces and structured into definable front and back regions. Performances of the cultural moment take place in the front region- much like a theater performance. The back region is closed to the tourists, and "allows concealment of props and activities that might discredit the performance out front" (MacCannell 1976:93). According to MacCannell, the back region is where authenticity is found. Thus, the staged tourist setting offers a superficial, inferior, and mystical representation of culture which is closer to a lie than to truth (1976:102).

Tourism literature presents several examples of contrived cultural moments. For example, Bruner (2001) raises the issue of the contrived tourism experience of a cultural other in his work on Maasai tourism in Kenya. Bruner compares three tourist sites that each present varying degrees of inauthentic images of the Maasai. First, images of Maasai warriors void of modern clothing or factory made objects were described to be

²See Appendix A for a discussion and critique of the Frankfurt School who were most prolific in their writings about authenticity as a condition of reproduced things.

presented during traditional Maasai dance performances at a postcolonial ranch for foreign audiences. Second, images of a multiethnic heritage of Kenya were projected during Maasai dance performances at a government museum during which the dancers were not members of the Maasai. Third, images of Africa from the perspective of American pop-culture are presented to tourists who sign up for a cocktail party performance simulating scenes from the Hollywood movie Out of Africa. Staged at a luxurious safari camp and dancing to music from Jamaican reggae and from the musical The Lion King, Maasai dancers become friendly, safe, and familiar to the tourist audience.

Smith (1989) offers another example of contrived tourism from her research on Eskimo tourism in Alaska. Documenting the emerging tourism industry, Smith reveals how members of the Eskimo cultural group who perform for tourists are a part of a minority. The few people who actually held fast to their traditional aesthetic forms were able to “capitalize upon their knowledge” (1989: 80). Handler (1988) in his work on Quebecois nationalism states that in an effort to promote a sense of cultural difference of Quebecois people, tourism was a venue to which folk dances and folk objects were put on display. Handler describes a folk dance that traditionally was a domestic, family event. Placed in the context of a tourist experience, the folk dance was “transformed into a public spectacle to which anyone could buy admission” (1988:78).

Tourists purchase art objects as souvenirs of their travels. In visual art forms, like paintings, photography, and drawing, traits that are associated with the visited group by the tourists are often represented in essentialized ways. Thompson (2006) describes how colonial administrators in the early 1900s crafted and marketed cultural representations of

Jamaica and the Bahamas as ideal tropical paradises to Western tourists. These paradise representations, mainly conveyed through photographic post-cards, encouraged the formation of a contrived tourist experience to match the pristine and picturesque images of beaches, palm trees, and fancy hotels. Living out the representations altered life for the islands' residents by either forbidding them to interact with tourists or by forcing them to act out the quintessential British colonial experience for the tourist. Therefore, tourist arts provide a useful strategy for studying the consumption of images that carry stereotypical associations. Outside of the context of tourism, these paintings may not be successful in any art market. The proliferation of stereotypical images in the Mountainville art market is directly related to the kind of cultural and geographic tourism that Mountainville offers.

Tourist arts are a common commodity in the world's tourist destinations. Although the cultural subjects and symbols differ in specific local meaning and representation, tourist arts do reflect the exoticism as well as the attachment to the local that both artists and tourists perceive. For example, in Appalachia, images of log cabins and undeveloped mountains, which largely make up the content and form of tourist art, are influenced by perceptions of identity that have emerged out of historical, political, economic, and social relations. These relations have produced a general perception of the Appalachian region as static, racially homogenous, poor, and exotic as compared to American mainstream (Batteau 1990; Billings, Norman, and Ledford 1999; Hsiung 1997; McNeil 1995; Pudup, Billings, and Waller 1995; Shapiro 1978; Williamson 1995). Cultural essentialisms produced by the commodification of difference foster misunderstanding and inaccurate knowledge of the world's cultures.

In these examples of contrived cultural moments within tourism, the audience consumes mystified make-believe which modifies traditional cultural forms. Yet, authenticity may exist for some actors who reflect upon and assign new meanings of traditional culture in their new cultural context- that of tourism, especially if livelihood is secured and/or the traditional culture is honored and celebrated. Such differing meanings held for the same cultural form suggests a conundrum of authenticity.

Conundrum of Authenticity

To delineate what I mean by “conundrum of authenticity,” I reiterate that “authenticity” refers to the worth, value, or significance embodied by icons and determined by individuals as they encounter cultural forms. Authenticity is formed in the relationship an individual has with a thing by a host of factors including personal experience, identity, cultural background, social position, and taste preference. Therefore, the significance an individual has for a cultural form, no matter its representative qualities, should not be judged inauthentic. If it means something to someone, then it is authentic on some level. Such notions of what is “authentic” present a real challenge in determining the condition of a thing. This project, though, is not concerned with evaluating the authenticity of cultural forms, but rather how and why individuals come to see some forms as more or less meaningful.

For that reason, this research on Mountainville tourist art uses the notion of “conundrum” to refer to the varying levels of authenticity associated with the paintings created and purchased in the tourist economy of Mountainville. On one hand, cultural icons employed in art are considered authentic to individuals who find these icons to mean something personal to them. On the other hand, these same cultural icons may not

be judged authentic by certain viewers because they believe the icons do not represent local populations, landscapes, or culture.

This conundrum of authenticity embodies the same tension found in structural and functional analyses of culture and human groups. Social analysis, however, shifted away from delineations of cultural coherency to focus on the complexity, divisions, intersections, historical constructions, and processes of collective identities- the significance of such should not be undervalued (Clifford 1988; Lindholm 2008; Rosaldo 1989). This shift in analysis is a capstone of anthropology's perspective toward culture and lends to this project the idea that culture is something not neatly bounded, homogenous, or autonomous. Indeed the "conundrum" of authenticity persists in the authentication of that which is seemingly inauthentic. The conundrum of authenticity as I observed in Mountainville's art market is evident in three instances relating to the practice of consumption, the value of tourist arts, and the representation of Appalachian culture.

The first instance of this puzzling problem of authenticity concerns the degree of agency consumers evoke during the practice of consumption. The capacity to evoke agency is relative to the consumer's perspective towards the structure of consumption. When I first entered the field, I observed a limited number of and repetition in the kind of subjects depicted in paintings. Some artists claimed that they try to paint what they think tourists want- a market shaped logic of what is an appropriate subject for sale. I believe, however, that artists also take into account what other artists, especially ones perceived as successful, paint and offer for sale. Because the artists are all looking at and talking to each other, and following a certain logic of what they believe succeeds in the market

place, the assumption that tourists only want local scenes depicting mountains, rivers, cabins, churches, barns, black bears, and wild flowers prevails and is manifested in market dominance of such icons. Artists new to the market see this dominance of icons and believe they must conform if they are to successfully compete. Such behavior may not be viewed as authentic because the artists conform to what already exists and may, in that conforming process, deny what is truly their artistic uniqueness.

On the other hand, many artists revealed to me that what the market supports is what they love to paint. Whatever market success they may or may not experience has no bearing on the subjects they choose to paint. These artists present a different perspective to conforming to market influence. They agree they would continue to depict mountains, rivers, cabins, churches, barns, black bears, and wildflowers whether or not these paintings sold (Fieldnotes).

Tourists, also, are bound by the same market logic that yields a narrow range of painting subjects and style. As they visit and look through several galleries and notice the repetitive subjects and styles, tourists become enculturated into what is considered appropriate art for sale. From this perspective, tourists only experience commodities that have been created for them. Even before the tourist enters the gallery, decisions about what they can own and what they might even want have already been made by gallery owners, artists, and the underlying logic of what constitutes as appropriate art images. How can a confined range of art images possess the capacity in which the ubiquitous viewer can make authentic meaning based on his/her unique experience? A greater variety of subjects, styles, and content of paintings than what is present in Mountainville would allow for a greater chance for a viewer to connect emotionally, conceptually, or

experientially to a particular art piece. Thus, variety within the art market yields higher probability of authenticity.

Yet, within the narrow range of options, tourists evaluate the art objects.

Sometimes with the help of artists and gallery workers, tourists consider what to or what not to purchase, and they make decisions to choose specific paintings they can relate to. From this perspective, consumers invoke their agency and demonstrate how meaningful a painting may be. A level of authenticity exists for the consumer who expresses his/her personal meaning by owning the painting. Moreover, the tourist commands influence over what the artist might create next- thus, demanding what art commodities the market offers. Therefore, consumers (both artists and tourists) are bounded by market forces, yet they assess options and make choices based on personal logic.

The second observable instance of this conundrum of authenticity regards the category of tourist arts. Many of the paintings created for tourists in Mountainville are sold as prints, copies of the original creation. As prints, the images usually vary from the original in size dimensions and in color quality. Occasionally, the images are cropped and show a portion of the original. Frequently, hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of individual prints of a specific painting are manufactured in printing houses outside of Mountainville and then shipped to the artist and/or gallery owner for sale in the gallery. The point is that the “painting” that a tourist buys is more than likely not the original, rather a duplicate of the original. Artists and gallery workers are clear about this distinction and gallery visitors are educated about the difference between the original painting and its print. Moreover, prices of the same image also indicate the difference between original and print as the print is always less expensive than the original.

The print version of an original painting, especially if prints are manufactured in large volumes, calls into question the authenticity of the art piece. As mass produced items, prints may not be considered authentic forms of art. They are removed by virtue of their production from the creator. Indeed, prints may not even be touched or examined by the artist. Coupled with subjects made up of contrived local culture and landscape, prints may be perceived as doubly inauthentic and void of genuine depiction of aesthetic value.

Prints are, however, observably acceptable forms of art in a tourist market (as well as in other art markets and venues) because people buy them. Although accessible to tourists shopping the market, in terms of supply and cost, prints garner a higher price point than other art and craft commodities available to tourists. Since the Renaissance, paintings and prints have shared a status over other aesthetic forms that render two-dimensional images more valuable, more desirable, and arguably more successful to express oneself (Fariello 2005). Furthermore, prints maintain a record of the maker's decisions during the creation process which maintains their authenticity as art from that particular maker.

Despite the value placed on these art commodities by Mountainville painters and tourists, this body of art goes largely ignored by national art markets and institutions- which adhere more to logics of value based in art history's chronologies of conceptual style and less to artistic skill in depicting regional culture and geography. Without question, Mountainville artists are skilled people, and painters in the area exhibit a phenomenal ability to replicate observable images in the physical world. Possessing such artistic skill and technique, many Mountainville artists are accepted to national art

societies. Yet, their work is definably not cutting edge or pushing limits of aesthetic experiences. From the perspective that art is meant to provoke imagination, these images only affirm what consumers imagine. They do not incite creative or original reflection. Thus, from an art history perspective tourist paintings for sale in Mountainville may not be considered authentic or original forms of art expression. In this case, the value for the images as authentic art varies as the context of the image object changes.

In contrast to the perspectives I have been reviewing, this project asserts that paintings created for the Mountainville tourist market are, indeed, authentic forms of art. As objects of art, they contain the possibility of enriching an individual's ordinary experience of everyday life (Fariello 2005b). This project considers art to be defined as the process or the resulting form of making something special. This perspective comes from Dissanayake (1992; 2001; 2003) and her work on the evolutionary basis of art. Dissanayake suggests that by elaborating, adorning, or making something special, whether it be speech, material goods, or behavior, humans increased their capacity for species survival. The human capacity for art creation and reception relieved anxiety, maintained group membership, and contributed to the enculturation of new members- all of which aided in the durability of the human species. Given this biological basis to art as a human activity, any object imbued with special meaning at any point of its duration is authentic. That is, objects carry the potential for authenticity because humans have the capacity to make objects special. Authenticity is assigned to the art objects for sale in Mountainville by the consumers who create it and the consumers who purchase it.

Tourist arts may differ in their functionality from other forms of art whose purposes are more inventive and visionary. As previously stated, tourist arts convey

significance about a place or a population experienced while one is on vacation. Tourist experiences are contrived, ordered, and repetitive. According to Christopher Steiner who researches the manufacture and consumption of African tourist art, “tourist arts...are structured around heavily redundant messages. Tourists...are not looking for new but for the obvious and familiar. Tourists are looking for...the forms they already know” (Steiner 1999:99,100). Thus, the narrow margin of painting styles and the limited number of repeatedly painted subjects in Mountainville’s art market are based on a structure of redundant messages, expressed not just by tourists but the artists as well. Steiner identifies this redundancy as seriality (Steiner 1999). Furthermore, the authenticity in these messages implies static, timelessness of the people and places the images represent (Kasfir 1999).

Tourist arts may be mass produced in order to maintain the seriality of redundancy and familiarity of messages. But, mass production does not automatically or necessarily result in an absence of authenticity. Indeed, mass produced objects can be “legitimate forms of cultural expression” (Steiner 1999:89). Jules-Rosette (1984; 1990) states that tourist arts are not just mass produced objects, but also contain signs of creativity and artistic skill. These signs make objects special, and thus, authentic. Steiner justifies this claim by suggesting that tourist art shares with other mass produced objects a logic based on redundancy and familiarity, albeit structured, for the capacity to communicate and express one’s individualism, identity, experiences, and/or values. Therefore, paintings and prints created for Mountainville’s tourist market hold the capacity for artists and tourists to make authentic meanings of the places, people, and experiences the images depict.

The third observable instance of this conundrum of authenticity concerns Appalachian representations. Depictions of local culture and place are trapped in the past and romanticized. Paintings portraying local scenes and people are free from evidence of daily life. Scenes do not contain contemporary automobiles, roadside trash, smog, dying forests, fancy cabins, park rangers, paved roads- all of which tourists experience during their visit to Mountainville. Therefore, images contained in Mountainville art may not be regarded authentic or true representations of the lived experiences of people associated with the Appalachian region. Yet, these glamorized depictions of Appalachia are highly valued by the people who paint and purchase them. People express sincere emotional and personal connection to these depictions. Some artists describe a genuine passion for painting pioneer cabins. Tourists see in the paintings what motivates them to travel to Mountainville- beautiful landscapes, a perceivably different way of life.

These depictions corroborate a particular cultural view that values nature but also upholds progress and technology, and that romanticizes history and favors racially white, patriarchal, and middle class social structures. These depictions also reflect the significance of vacations to a cultural mindset that reveres work and livelihood. To capture these subjects in something culturally perceived as timeless and as sacred as art makes sense to some consumers. Thus, the meanings assigned or decoded in romanticized images are authenticated by consumers' (artists and tourists) sincerity and genuine expression of their personal and cultural mindsets. Validating images leads to their continued use in the market and transformation into stereotypical icons of Appalachia.

My research with artists in Mountainville allowed me to see the range of authenticity as it is assigned to images of Appalachian culture. Differing values of authenticity depend greatly on many factors, including the position of the person within the art market, the experiences one may have had of the paintings' subjects, or this research's scale of examination. In addressing this conundrum this project presents ethnographic evidence that says more about the selection of images beyond market forces. In reality, the individual meanings, the experiences, and the life stories of artists in this study factor into the production of paintings just as much as do tourist demands.

The impact of economic and political structures on the development and persistence of stereotypes in Appalachian art cannot be denied and is elaborated in greater detail in Chapter Six. Appalachian artists and tourists to Appalachia, nonetheless, evoke a degree of agency. They are not mere puppets of cultural structures. In the marketplace artists and tourists make choices and have preferences for certain cultural images. These preferences can be based on many factors, particularly nostalgia for a romanticized past and the need to express one's self. This project, using a consumption model and its integration of political economy and symbolic anthropology, demands attention to the values and meanings that artists and tourists actively place on art objects. To operationalize this attention, this project documents the narration, the ordering of space, and the rituals of the exchange of objects of tourist art.

Ritual/ Performance

To see the manufacture and the consumption of an art object as ritualized activities presents an opportunity to see the interconnections among symbols, actions, narration, and space as they are structured to facilitate experiences with, and then sales

of, art objects. Indeed, as ritual objects, art pieces invite viewers to look, to engage, and to make sense of what the art contains; thereby, allowing viewers “to participate in a second creative act” of designating meaning in the art (Fariello 2005b:149). The social drama approach this project takes frames the processes that activate meaning in cultural icons depicted in Mountainville art and focuses on the ways that artists and tourists use these cultural icons as symbols of their experience and individualism (Turner 1957)³.

According to Victor Turner, whose work on rituals and symbols of the Ndembu is seminal to the anthropology of meaning, ritual is “a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors’ goals and interests” (Turner 1977:183; Deflem 1991). Turner’s definition of ritual characterizes the repeated introductions, movement, and use of icons I observed of artists and tourist/visitors in Mountainville galleries. Words, gestures, and the organization of space constitute performances acted out by both artists and visitors. Through these performances, information contained in iconic symbols is shared and presented as authoritative (Turner 1968). Moreover, the shared symbolism reflects cultural values of the artists and tourists. Turner’s work elaborates more on the changing effects of ritual on an individual within his/her social context than this project was able to observe in the context of a tourist art market (Turner 1964, 1967, 1969). Through the rituals performed in galleries, however, visitors experience change and potentially increased status as travelers and as art owners and art aficionados if they purchase a painting or print. Furthermore, artists potentially undergo change as their status as successful artists and aesthetic authorities is reinforced.

³The social drama approach provides a focus on processes absent from the static framework of functional-structuralism and of Levi-Strauss.

This project builds on previous work that applies the framework of ritual to processes within the tourism industry. Indeed, tourism has been modeled as a ritualized system (Burns 1999) of exchange in which tourists engage with varying degrees of agency in the construction and reproduction of meanings that make a tourist destination significant (Edensor 1998:6; MacCannell 1976). During the manufacturing of art objects, artist actors undergo routines to make their art in conventional spaces and time, invoking and reproducing specific knowledge for tourists who act as audience. As ritual players, artists have embodied the perceptions they believe tourists have of Appalachia. Artists further constitute these perceptions as cultural symbols which they then reproduce in their art. Tourists embody these same perceptions of culture which are activated when they purchase or praise the art. The use of cultural symbols by the artists and tourists constitutes the art as cultural objects. Once conveyed in art, Appalachia becomes an objectified subject, thus completing the circle of a constituted perception.

The theme underlying the consumption of Appalachian art as ritual is the ordering of the experience. Just as a performance has actors, audience, and bounded space, so too does one's encounter with the art objects. Once the conditions of the performance are understood, then the establishment of meanings may be understood. According to Edensor (1998), tourist spaces are regulated according to varying levels of control. Relationships between the tourist and the site reflect geographical identities that place the site into larger spatial networks. Thus, tourism can be equated to a performance metaphor in which there are "constraints and opportunities that influence a tourist's actions and experiences" (Edensor 1998: 8). Edensor is working from a post-structuralist framework where tourism is seen as a ritualized performance with the tourist site as the stage with

bounded space and time and the tourist is a performer with varying degrees of space, time, and movement constraints. Thus, this bounded performance impacts to what extent the tourist can experience and then interpret his/her experience of the Taj Mahal (Edensor 1998: Chapter 4).

Edensor's work raises some interesting questions about the ordering of the experience of Appalachian art. What are the constraints and opportunities of tourists to the Appalachian region? How is their space regulated? How are Mountainville tourists spaces regulated differently from other vacation destinations? This third question presents the opportunity to see symbols of cultural difference shaping the tourists' overall Mountainville experience. A couple of tourists and slightly more residents of Mountainville reported to me that Mountainville was like any other vacation destination. Indeed, some artists and business owners likened Mountainville to a carnival or to a popular beach resort town that competes for Mountainville's tourist business (Fieldnotes).

Despite these few acknowledgments of the lack of cultural difference Mountainville presents, much more evidence, especially the perpetuation of stereotypical cultural images in art, points to the construction of Mountainville as representative of a distinct, albeit familiar, cultural entity. Most tourists initially experience art with stereotypical content in artists' galleries. Usually, art works are displayed all along the walls of each public room in the gallery. The gallery is a place for tourists to make initial contact with examples of art perceived to be representational of Appalachia, to meet the "real live" artist, and to experience cultural characteristics associated with Southern Appalachia, namely hospitality.

In addition to regulated space, tourists' receptions of the art work are regulated. Certain emotions are expected and encouraged to be felt while the tourist is viewing the art. Artists regulate this aspect of the art experience by attaching titles and detailed descriptions to their work. Titles subconsciously suggest the associations the viewer should make when looking at Appalachian scenes. Additionally, the desire for nostalgia is fulfilled by linking souvenir objects to the past through narration.

Nostalgia is one of many emotions that artists hope to evoke in their gallery visitors. The anthropology of emotions discourse provides insight into the theorizing of emotional responses to art. Agnes Heller lays out a functional approach to emotions suggesting that "to feel means to be involved in something" such that the individual is able to relate and be connected to the world or make sense of the world from his/her point of view (Heller 1979:174). Thus, feelings have socio-cultural dimensions which demand attention to the social body in which the individual's emotions are situated (Lutz and White 1986; Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990). Humans' emotions are shaped by learning culturally specific reactions from their environment (Milton 2005). Expressing learned emotions reiterates connections and a sense of belonging to the individual's cultural environment. Therefore, when tourists (and artists) express their individual emotional reactions to the art they see in Mountainville, they are expressing feelings within a range of culturally sanctioned responses. Moreover, the range of emotions that tourists may express upon seeing an art piece provide a reliable set of emotions and reactions to which artists and gallery owners can specifically market. This project connects responses expressed by individuals to meta-cultural structures that have shaped the art market and shaped perceptions of Appalachian culture.

By examining the production and the reception of Appalachian art as a ritual with actors, audience, space, and embodied knowledge, much can be learned about the processes through which values constitute meanings and meanings become assigned to symbols. These values and meanings reflect two other components in this project: personal identity and Appalachian culture. Identity and personhood become useful concepts when trying to understand the meanings of stereotypes. Identity is the perceptual understanding of self that links individuals to form collectives. Identity is not merely generated from within the self, but is shaped by social structures. Personhood may be understood in the context of highly individualized societies as that conception of self that is constructed by cultural structures, but then is adopted and lived out by individuals (Clifford 1988; Friedman 1994; Mauss 1985). Thus, identity and personhood are deeply connected and are important elements in human behavior and decision making, especially in economic transactions.

Marilyn Strathern, in her work with the Trobriand Islanders, shows how “persons” are not autonomous agents, but are “artifacts” of the way relationships are managed through the exchange of objects (Strathern 1987: 298). Inspired by Strathern’s formulations of personhood as a processual construction within political and social dynamics (Strathern 1988; 1999), this project will demonstrate how artists and tourists as “persons” are formulated and mediated by relationships made by the exchange of meaningful objects. Were it not for the relationship between artists and tourists, then the event of exchange would not occur. Moreover, artists and tourists form and express identity through the social relations that structure tourist opportunities. For example, most of the Mountainville artists involved in this project are from other parts of the U.S. Yet,

in relation to tourists who visit Mountainville, the artists represent themselves as a Mountainville insider, native, or the local folk of Mountainville (Fieldnotes).

Because of the artists' position as commodity producer in the tourism market, artists are granted and demonstrate authority of the local geography- as it is reflected in their art. Tourists may even feel compelled to purchase a painting because of their direct interaction with a specific artist. Although the art object is detached physically from the artist, it contains elements of the artist's personality and specifically the artist's vision and hand strokes. The art object personifies the artist or an experience with the artist and may serve as a source of value for tourists who interact with the artist. Using a model of personhood distinguishes further meanings of objects from meanings of relationships, which certainly complicates an understanding as to why or why not certain persons identify with stereotypes depicted in tourist art.

Additionally, expressing one's personal identity is connected through art objects and through market experiences to one's conception of Appalachian culture. Some tourists I surveyed could not provide a definition of Appalachia- a couple of individuals claimed it was a medical condition. Ergo, some tourists are introduced to the symbols and meanings associated with Appalachia through marketing campaigns. This introduction allows the tourists to position and pronounce their personal identity relative to their newly endowed understanding of Appalachia. Tourists may identify with the images and symbols they encounter in tourist art and consider them to be representative of themselves. In contrast, tourists may form identities that exclude such imagery, thus differentiating themselves from the population they are visiting (Abram and Waldren 1997). Artists, too, express personal identity and personal values through the images they

paint. Some artists dedicate their efforts to capturing a stereotypical depiction of Appalachian culture to which they feel an affinity. Others eagerly depict scenes of Appalachian geography expressing personal values for nature and non-commercialization. The negotiation of identity carried out by artists and tourists through their consumptive practices is a notable contribution from this project's investigation.

Conclusion

Woven throughout this project are views of the structures of local art production. Questions driving my project include what local business structures are in place, how the skilled labor, managerial, owner, and artist positions are placed in such structures as galleries, and what kinds of cultural meanings are engaged and give legitimacy to production forms and economic relations. In addition, this project examines the stratification in art consumption by analyzing the variation of art in the local market, the types of preferred art, the social positions held by consumers, and the cultural meanings engaged and valued by consumers. Combining an historical materialist approach from political economic paradigms with a post-structuralist approach from symbolic anthropology, this project examines the social and cultural processes that produce and sustain the art market. By establishing the processes at work within the local tourist art market, explanations for the perpetuation of stereotypical Appalachian images should be evident.

This project, building on a consumption studies paradigm with lessons learned from tourist art studies and literature about ritual and performance, suggests a way to conceptualize Appalachian culture that integrates stereotypical images with accounts of life that differ from such stereotypes. Additionally, these symbols provide counter-

hegemonic opportunities for artists who want to resist dependency on waged labor and the constraining work environment that accompanies such labor. By acknowledging that stereotypes are important to and aid individuals whose livelihoods or opportunities to express personal experience and tastes lie within the tourism industry, the persistence of stereotypes employed in Appalachian art may be explained.

CHAPTER THREE

STRETCHING THE CANVAS: DESCRIPTION OF FIELD SITE, RESEARCH METHODS, AND RESEARCH TIME LINE

*Turning off the interstate
Getting caught by three lanes of traffic
Vacationers from nearby states
And three RVs from Canada*

*Crawling allows for car window shopping
Of possible attractions
Knife museum, music theaters, outlet malls, miniature golf and go-go carts
Helicopter rides, feed live bears, see moonshine stills*

*Pancake houses next to hoe-down comedy routines followed by hotels and motels
The trolley pulls to the right
And away we go
Towards the mountains*

Field Site

To achieve this study's objectives of understanding the cultural distinctiveness portrayed by cultural icons in art made for and purchased by tourists, I conducted research in Mountainville, Tennessee. This particular mountain community was chosen based on its high levels of tourist activities coupled with high concentrations of art production, art consumption, and socio-economic diversity. I wrote the poem above to describe what millions of people might experience as they approach Mountainville. The effort to promote this town as a "mountain" tourist destination increases the likelihood that Mountainville produces stereotypes in the marketplace.

In order to draw reliable and valid conclusions regarding the role of stereotypical icons in the manufacture of cultural distinctiveness, this project gathered data from interviews, content analysis, surveys, time allotment observations, and participant-observation to understand what icons are being used, how these icons resonate with cultural stereotypes and what functions the icons serve. Contact with tourists shed light

on tourists' perceptions of Appalachian culture and their interactions with tourist paintings. Interviews with individual artists enables an understanding of the processes involved in the employment of essentialized cultural icons in paintings as well as the meanings assigned to particular icons.

Mountainville is a congested tourist destination easily accessed by half the population of the United States. By the national park service's recent count, ten million people visit the town every year, yet 2000 U.S. census figures set the permanent population at 3,382 people (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Mountainville has a history of tourism illustrated by the establishment of a hiking club in 1920 and a national park adjacent to the town boundary in the 1930s. Within the city limits and three miles from downtown, Mountainville boasts an eleven mile long arts and crafts community. Approximately seventy galleries located downtown and in the arts and crafts community offer tourists a variety of crafts and arts. There is also a settlement school in downtown Mountainville that began art and craft workshops in 1912- signifying a strong presence of art production and consumption.

According to figures from the U.S. 2000 census, Mountainville's median household income is \$37,606 with 42 percent households earning \$10,000 to \$34,999 and 26 percent households earning \$35,000 to \$49,999. Additional 27 percent households earn \$50,000 to \$199,999 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). These figures indicate that Mountainville residents are predominantly working to middle class. Six percent of Mountainville's families are below the poverty line. These income figures do not report household holdings, property, and other assets which may be valued in the millions of

dollars and which may indicate a wealthy upper class. For example, one gallery owner reported a print and painting inventory valued and insured at one million dollars.

Employment of Mountainvillians in the labor force was at 88 percent in the 2000 census with 10 percent of working residents unemployed and 2 percent in the armed forces. The national unemployment rate in 2000 was 5.8 percent. Of the employed residents of Mountainville, 39 percent held jobs in the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services sectors. Another 11 percent held retail job and 9 percent had construction jobs (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). These kinds of jobs reflect the tourism based economy of Mountainville.

Census figures for Mountainville residents' education levels report that 82 percent of adults 25 years and over graduated from high school or its equivalency. This percentage is slighter more than the national average of 80 percent. The percentage of Mountainvillians who earned a bachelor's degree or higher is lower at 19 percent than the national average of 24 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Statistics for education levels and employment levels triangulated with observations and interviews with Mountainville business people suggest that although Mountainville offers opportunity for private waged and salaried jobs, many of these positions are available in retail, accommodation, food services, and recreation segments of a potentially seasonal tourist market. Consequently, these kinds of jobs require less specialized skills and pay lower wages, especially compared to positions that require employees to perform or to create art, juxtaposing skilled labor with unskilled labor.

The ratio of occupied to vacant housing units also indicates a tourist economy. Only 39 percent of Mountainville's housing units are occupied, leaving 61 percent

vacant. Of the vacant housing units, 56 percent are used for recreation (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). No explanation is provided by the census bureau for how the remaining 44 percent vacant units are used. I suggest that these include new construction homes and condominiums built to attract retired persons to move to Mountainville. The national percentage in 2000 for occupied housing is at 91 percent and vacant housing is at 9 percent. Such variation further demonstrates the prevalence of vacation accommodations in Mountainville. Construction figures depict growth during the 1990s when 40 percent of the housing stock in 2000 was built. Twenty-three percent of houses in 2000 were built in the 1980s and 27 percent were constructed in the 1960s and 1970s. Corresponding to these percentages of house construction are the figures that report migration into Mountainville. Since 1995, 26 percent of the residents in 2000 moved to Mountainville from a different state or country (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Retirement living in an attractive location and employment opportunities associated with tourist economy may be linked to these migration numbers.

Most of Mountainville's residents, 95.7 percent, identify themselves as racially white. National percentages report the three largest racialized groups in the U.S. to be 75 percent White, 12.3 percent Black or African American, and 12.5 percent Latino. Statistical evidence, as well as observational and anecdotal evidence I collected, cites emerging minority populations among residents in Mountainville. Latinos constitute 2 percent of residents while the third largest racialized group in Mountainville is Asian Indians at 1.6 percent. Numbers in these populations are admittedly small and were recorded in the 2000 census at 66 and 53 individuals respectively. These numbers do signify a slight increase in the Asian Indian and Latino populations since the 1990 census

when Asian Indians accounted for 1.1 percent of the population and Latinos accounted for 0.01 percent, especially considering the majority of this research project was conducted in 2005 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000; 1990).

Census figures, especially those measuring racial groups, suggest that Mountainville has some demographic diversity among its residents. Although Mountainville is dissimilar to national percentages of racial identity, some of the town's residents identify with minority ethnic populations refuting assumptions of racial homogeneity. Mountainville is predominantly white, but not exclusively white. Furthermore, census figures provide a portrait of the town that deviates from the pioneer mountain culture that is promoted by the town itself to those who might consider visiting. One common cultural icon I observed in destination brochures as well as in street front facades to associate Mountainville with pioneer culture is the mountain cabin, which does not boast electricity, running water, or indoor plumbing. In actuality, only 100 homes, out of 3,958 housing units in Mountainville in 2000, or 6.6 percent, lacked complete plumbing and kitchen facilities or telephone service (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). As a part of a region historically perceived to be culturally different from mainstream American culture, the town is often portrayed by homogenous cultural icons. Because Mountainville is a regional tourist center marketing itself as a destination of cultural difference and because Mountainville has a concentration of art production and consumption, it served as a feasible and reasonable site for this field research.

Archaeological evidence establishes that Native Americans inhabited this wooded mountainous area 8,000 years ago and used the land for hunting, fishing, and gathering wild plants (Pierce 2000). Mountainville's celebrated history is traced to subsistence

farming when the first family came from South Carolina in 1803. Like much of the rest of the country at the time, these folks lived in log cabins, grew much of their own food, used materials from the land to make whatever goods they needed, and traded for the rest. Within a decade, this family of eight people grew to seventy-nine and was joined by ten other families. By 1850 Mountainville's population was close to 450 people and included mostly farmers as well as general day laborers. There was some commercial activity with a general store. In the early 1900s, Mountainville was connected to the logging industry and played host to wealthier residents from a much larger city forty miles away. The first hotel served the workers, managers, and others involved with the timber. As more people came to Mountainville and appreciated its scenic beauty word spread that it was an appropriate and worthy place to visit. By the 1920s, the tourism industry began to develop in Mountainville and the hiking trails were the first main attraction that drew people to the town.

Murmurs of forming a national park to preserve the scenic beauty of the mountains began on the state and regional level as early as the 1890s, and manifested in 1925 as federal legislation and in 1934 as dedication of 800 square miles formerly used as homesteads, farms and timber lands (Trout 1984). Families in several communities were relocated to outside the park boundary (Dunn 1988; Frome 1997; Pierce 2000; Shields 1981; Williams 1995). Mountainville happened to be saved from this relocation as the park boundary was drawn just south of the city limit. Close proximity of the park proved very profitable to Mountainvillians as travelers to the park stayed in hotels and ate at restaurants located in the town. The creation of a national park and the Civilian Conservation Corps, which built bridges, roads, and trails in the park, really spurred the

tourism industry in Mountainville. Even the CCC workers provided cash flow in the local economy as they would spend some of their government wages on goods and services in Mountainville. Once a federal highway connected Mountainville to a nearby larger city in 1934 and national advertising was launched, the tourism industry began to grow fast with 500,000 visitors in 1935 (Trout 1984:101). Because of national economic constraints brought on by the Great Depression and World War II, Mountainville experienced a decline in tourism, but enjoyed the start of a long and increasing visitor count in the mid-1940s.

With an emerging middle class and the widespread use of the automobile, traveling became a normal cultural behavior for Americans, and in 1950, two million tourists visited the national park via Mountainville. Based upon Mountainville marketing campaigns, these visitors probably came from the Eastern U.S. from New York to Florida (Trout 1984). The tourism industry amplified economic success for local people since much of the downtown property in Mountainville has remarkably remained in the ownership of original families. Three to four generations ago, leaders of Mountainville's landowning families recommended that lands remain within family possession. They advised younger generations against dividing downtown property among inheritors, and instead of selling, resulted in formal family corporations that control lease relations and rates. Property values initially enabled grocers, artists, and residents to occupy downtown space. Since Mountainville's tourism boom in the 1980s, property values have skyrocketed. At the time of this field research, lease rates are close to \$100 a square foot per month throughout the calendar year⁴. Such steep rents enable only those businesses

⁴The perception that downtown Mountainville's lease rates are outrageously unaffordable were expressed to me by many artists and businesspeople when they complained that

with the highest profit margins to gain access to the downtown tourist crowds. Therefore, Mountainville's tourist industry is composed of T-shirt shops, knick-knack stores, carnival-esque attractions, and tiny retail shops with the majority of art galleries, grocers, and residents regulated to enclaves outside of the downtown area.

Mountainville has a total land area of approximately ten square miles (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). This land area is composed of mountain tops and ridges reaching 3,500 feet in elevation, small hollows in between ridges, and flat lands along creek beds. Of the ten square miles that make up the city limits, approximately three square miles make up downtown Mountainville. Linearly spread along the banks of a rocky and shallow river, the downtown area is bounded by high ridges to the south, west, northeast, and east, affording mountainous views in any direction. The main traffic artery in Mountainville runs north to south towards the national park entrance. Along this route, two and three story buildings crowd together creating a dense and congested commercial district. Buildings give home to restaurants, gift shops, T-shirt shops, candy stores, amusement attractions like miniature golf, and hotels. There are ten traffic lights on the main street in downtown Mountainville, clearly marked to help visitors navigate to these various businesses. All of the residences from Mountainville's past on this route have been replaced by retail space, although some residences remain on streets that spur from the main artery. Parking is very limited downtown, and visitors to Mountainville are

Mountainville's lease rates were just as expensive as rates in New York City. To compare, retail space in New York City's Gold Coast in Manhattan, prime real estate located in the densest commercial district along Madison, Park, and 5th Avenues, are leased for \$600-\$1,000 per square foot per month according to web-based real estate advertisements.

encouraged to take the city trolley (the third largest public transportation system in the state) or walk to their destination.

The main artery in Mountainville connects the city to the federal interstate system twenty-five miles north. Another route branching off the main artery in downtown connects Mountainville to the interstate twenty-five miles east. Three miles on this route east of downtown is the location of the arts and crafts community. Both the north and the east routes are state parkways with mostly four lanes, giving some ease to traveling to Mountainville if the traffic is light and the weather is pleasant. Another route south of town goes west through the national park for approximately twenty-five miles. This route is narrow, two-lanes, and winds through hugging mountains on one side and a small river on the other. Many tourists travel this route to access hiking trails and picnic spots and to enjoy scenery preserved by the park.

Mountainville is not the only municipality in the county focused on tourism. There are two neighboring cities that offer tourists activities, and both are located on the north-south route from the interstate that eventually becomes Mountainville's main street. Moreover, the national park has a second entrance twenty-five miles west of Mountainville. Here another but smaller town, referred to in this dissertation as Rocky River, relies solely on the tourism industry. Together these other municipalities compete with Mountainville for tourists' visits and dollars. To make it more attractive to tourists, the Mountainville department of tourism promotes specific features within the city, including the town's mountain heritage, the proximity of the national park, the arts and crafts community, the quaint shops along the main street, and a large, salt-water aquarium (seemingly out of place). Additionally, the department of tourism recommends alternative

routes that bypass these towns in an attempt to limit the impact of distraction these cities present to tourists headed to Mountainville.

Methods

Research procedures for this project include content analysis, interviews, surveys, observations, and participant-observation. These procedures provided a wealth of data and helped me understand the complexities of the art market (including politics, economics, identity, and emotions) as well as the marketing of certain qualities of a product and place required in a tourist industry. Qualitative and quantitative data were gathered, sorted, and thematically analyzed.

Although artists and craftspeople in Mountainville offer a plethora of objects for sale, this project focuses on the art medium of paintings and their commercially produced prints for three reasons. First, paintings provide recognizable and manipulatable symbols and their associated meanings which reflect the communication, the materialization, and the social networks that produce cultural ideas. Secondly, according to preliminary interviews conducted with artists in Appalachian tourist destinations, paintings are more popular than other art and craft forms such as glass or ceramics (except for coffee mugs) because of their two dimensional qualities and various sizes. Thus, they are easy to ship and display. Moreover, artists and gallery owners indicated that because images evoke a frequent recollection of memory and experience, tourists are more likely to select objects with images than without images. Because of tourists' preferences for art as a form of souvenir, painters across the Appalachian region are successful in attracting tourists to their galleries. Therefore, painters in Appalachia and their painted messages of Appalachian cultural stereotypes reach a national audience. Thirdly, touristic art studies

as well as Appalachian art studies predominantly focus on handicraft or folk craft which includes artistic expressions through carving, textiles, and pottery. Little attention has been given to paintings. This void may be due to the “untraditional” use of technology to commercially reproduce inexpensive prints of paintings. Print technology does not fit scholarly notions of “folk” or “handicraft” (Barker 1991; Eaton 1937; Graburn 1976, 1999).

Although this project focuses on paintings, there are other competing mediums of tourist art which contain alternative cultural representations, especially pottery, textiles, and wood sculptures. Ignoring these mediums and artists that create them limits this study’s understanding of the complexities and variation within art worlds. Focusing on one art medium in which to locate cultural icons, however, allows for reliable comparisons of imagery.

Field-site Gallery List

An overall index of art and craft galleries was compiled in February and March 2005 from gallery listings in city web-sites, travel brochures, and local phone directories. Galleries within the city limits of Mountainville were included as were galleries located beyond the city limits but within the metro-pole of tourist activities, attractions, and accommodations. Starting with 109 total art and craft galleries, I determined by visiting or phoning each gallery that approximately thirty-eight galleries carry original paintings and prints of original paintings. The other galleries were eliminated from the research site list because they were either no longer in business, did not want to participate, or did not sell original paintings or prints of paintings. Some of these galleries sold photographs, pottery, textiles, woodworking, or sculpture. Research activities were conducted in

selected galleries from this master list of thirty-eight total galleries. Thirty-one of these galleries were located within the ten square miles that make up Mountainville's city limits. The remaining seven galleries were located in Mountainville's three neighboring towns.

From the master list, two separate lists of ten galleries each were compiled for the content analysis and the timed observations. A list of five galleries/festivals at which surveys were conducted was also assembled. To select galleries for each of these lists, I used a table of random numbers published in a social science research textbook. For each of the three lists, a different column of random numbers was used in order to gain as much variety of field sites as possible. Some galleries were selected for two lists, however.

Recruitment

Several steps were taken to recruit participants. First, I made contact with artists and gallery owners/managers through a mailed letter introducing myself and a brochure describing my research project. Initially, I included a stamped postcard on which the artist or gallery owner/manager could indicate his/her interest in participating in my project. I discovered very quickly that this method was ineffective. I received only one interested postcard out of two total returned cards. I then decided to visit the artist or gallery owner/manager after mailing the letter and brochure so that I could talk to them in person about my project. This method proved to be very effective at obtaining participants. Although most participants agreed to participate and scheduled interviews with me, less than five galleries chose not to participate. Respecting their decisions, I did not request reasons for their non-participation and wished them luck instead.

Such face to face and personal connections became an emerging theme within this project as artists and gallery owners/managers are conditioned to behave in friendly, enthusiastic, and kind ways in order to ensure gallery sales. Unfortunately, many gallery visitors do not respond to this attempt at making a personal connection. Many visitors seemed to focus on looking quickly through a gallery and then move on to the next gallery. Gallery workers likened this behavior to that of a “zombie” (Interview MP) and saw this behavior as a result of the saturation of images for tourists to see and galleries to visit. Thus, many artists and gallery owners/managers were delighted to receive the amount of attention and interest that I offered through my research.

Interviews

The bulk of fieldwork data came from forty-six interviews conducted with fifty participants. I conducted four interviews with couples. Each of the interviews lasted between 1.5-2.5 hours and occurred between January 2005 and January 2006. Interviewees were selected through both random and snowball methods. In the case of random selection, I contacted those artists and gallery owners/managers whose galleries were randomly selected to the list of either content analysis or observations. Interviewees selected by snowball method were recommended to me by other artists, gallery owners/managers, or community members. Of the fifty interviewees, twenty-one are professional artists, ten are gallery coordinators/ owners, five represent a grassroots organization concerned with tourism development, five are city officials, four are tourists attending classes at Mountainville’s art and craft school, three are retail business owners or managers, and two are educators including a middle school art teacher, who was my landlady and my main contact person.

Of the fifty interviewees, fourteen are female, thirty-six are male. Within the group of artists interviewed, five are females and sixteen are males. In turn, of the gallery coordinators/owners, four are females and six are male. Although gender is not a primary focus of this research, the ratio of men to women artists and gallery coordinators/owners warrants future examination of the influence of gender identity on access to careers in the arts. In addition, racial homogeneity in the population samples of this research offer direction for investigations on minority access to careers in art.

Of the twenty-one artists producing work in Mountainville, five were raised in Mountainville or surrounding counties; sixteen came from farther places. Two of the gallery coordinators/owners are from the local area, while eight are not. Many of the artists and gallery coordinators/owners who moved to Mountainville indicated during interviews that the beauty of the local mountain scenery with a large tourist market motivated their decision to relocate. Several artists, seventeen of the twenty-one, operate and own their own galleries. These folks are self-employed with three operating galleries entirely by themselves, and fourteen relying on his/her spouse/partner for help in the daily activities of the gallery business. Four artists produce work for both dealer galleries as well as their own galleries. For all artists, tasks like managing inventory, marketing products, maintaining gallery space, updating accounting, and cashiering sales often distract the artist from producing work. These responsibilities add to the complex dimension of a Mountainville artist's life. Additionally, eight of the gallery coordinators/owners actually own their gallery business forcing these folks to juggle artist recruitment with gallery management.

I discovered scheduling interviews was much easier during spring and fall months. The summer tourist season proved too busy for artists and gallery personnel. During the winter season, many galleries were closed because of a lack of business. Taking advantage of this time of slow sales, many artists took vacations, or focused on producing their work. Interviews were always conducted at places of business during business hours. This enabled artists to run their galleries while being interviewed. In almost every interview, phone and customer interruptions occurred- which allowed for observations of interactions between artist and gallery visitors.

In the course of the interview, my artist participants answered questions about what they painted, the process through which they painted, what style they painted, and the kinds of feedback they received about their work from gallery visitors and patrons. Gallery coordinators/owners were asked about the criteria they use for selecting paintings for their inventory. Both groups were asked to describe marketing strategies and business policies. These questions allowed me to engage with individual artists and gallery owners and enabled my understanding of the processes and meanings involved in the production and employment of cultural symbols in paintings.

I also conducted interviews with officials from the Mountainville Department of Tourism, the city government of Mountainville, local art school educators, and businesspeople operating restaurants, hotels, and shopping complexes. Many interviewees shared information about local political and economic policies implemented to promote and control tourism, especially promotional information used to attract tourists. Such policies have major impact on artists and tourists, i.e. tax rates for property in more accessible locations. Some of these officials, educators, and businesspeople had

come together in a grassroots organization to reflect and envision directions for Mountainville's tourism industry. All of my interviewees, including artists and gallery owners, were asked to describe the character of Mountainville's tourism industry, and what they knew about Appalachian culture, stereotypes, and icons. See Appendix B for the interview schedule and Appendix C for their responses regarding Appalachian stereotypes and icons.

In addition to creating a sense of the context of Mountainville's tourism industry, my intention to conduct interviews was to gather qualitative data about the kinds and frequencies of images connoting stereotypes of Appalachian culture. In order to determine the patterns of cultural icons, a free list of Appalachian cultural stereotypes and a list of icons were generated by each of the fifty interviewees. Towards the end of each interview, I supplied the participants with a worksheet that asked them to list their perceptions of Appalachian cultural stereotypes and to list the kinds of iconography they believe might represent Appalachian cultural stereotypes (See Appendix C). I interviewed four couples who consolidated their lists into one giving me a total of forty-six separate lists. These free lists were collected and compiled to determine the prevalent perceptions of Appalachian cultural icons.

Items from the free lists were assembled into categories which were then used to assess the frequency of cultural icons in paintings. The process of analyzing the lists started with me separating responses from each list and placing similar responses together. Similar responses emerged as categories. For example, the first few responses about Appalachian stereotypes that I extracted from the free lists were neighborly,

independent, broken down porches, inarticulate, ignorance, backwoods, lazy, shot guns, backwards, standoff-ish, friendly, and proud.

From these responses, categories of character/personality traits, material landscape, education, and isolation seemed to connect responses. In the category of character/personality traits I placed responses of neighborly, friendly, independent, proud, and lazy. Responses of porches and shot guns made up the category of material landscape. The category of under-educated was formed by responses of inarticulate, ignorance, and backwards, while responses relating to category of isolation were indicated by responses like standoff-ish and backwoods. I maintained this process of analysis until ten categories adequately accounted for each response. The categories from the list of stereotypes and the list of icons are included as Appendix C. Although responses were categorized in one sitting to achieve consistency of analysis, other researchers might categorize responses differently.

Content Analysis

I conducted two content analyses. The first examined paintings in galleries and the second examined images used in signs and storefronts in downtown Mountainville. By systematically itemizing imagery, these two analyses provide the opportunity to discern patterns of icons as they are presented to consumers.

The first content analysis was conducted in randomly selected galleries throughout the fieldwork time line. To obtain permission to conduct an analysis of gallery paintings, I scheduled interviews with the artists and gallery coordinators/owners whose galleries were selected for the content analysis so that they would understand what my project was about and feel comfortable with me as a researcher. A catalogue of every

third painting in ten galleries was compiled to look at the patterns of cultural icons available in this tourist market. A total of 455 original paintings and prints of paintings from ten randomly selected galleries was catalogued. During the cataloguing, I recorded the subject matter and detailed the contents of every third painting exhibited on the walls, shelves, or propped on the floor from top to bottom and left to right of each gallery. After content descriptions were read and evaluated, each painting was assigned a simple subject code made up of two to three words and grouped with other similar images. Then paintings were assigned one-word subject codes and grouped into larger categories. Finally, similar subjects were grouped into types. Subject codes were developed from patterns in the data of paintings as well as the categories that emerged from the free lists of iconography generated during informant interviews. The frequencies of images in paintings were derived from sorting the one word subject codes first and then sorting the simple subject codes. Analysis results from the gallery paintings are detailed in Chapter Five. Examples are listed in Appendix D.

The second content analysis I conducted examined the words and the images contained in the signs and storefronts in downtown Mountainville. The data derived from this research procedure indicates the range of icons and imagery experienced by tourists as they generally move through the downtown area. This data provides evidence that Appalachian icons are not limited to paintings, but can also be encountered in non-art venues. Such an abundance of icons contributes to the connotations made between Mountainville tourist activities and Appalachian culture. In order to collect this data, I catalogued word references and images placed in business signs and in shop windows as I walked along a mile long section in the middle of downtown Mountainville. This is the

densest section of Mountainville with the highest number of retail spaces. After listing all of the references, I sorted them into seven categories according to similarities among them. Images and some words referring to pioneer material culture occurred most frequently, followed by references to nature and then to nearby mountains. Business names that signified the past were presented as were names that implied Native American culture, Europe, and Southern culture, albeit in smaller frequencies. See Appendix D for a list of the images.

Surveys

Two sets of surveys were collected at gallery locations throughout the fieldwork time line. The first survey targeted gallery visitors as they exited the gallery. Contact with gallery visitors provided opportunities to gather demographic data of tourists, to evaluate tourists' experience and reception to art work in the galleries, and to assess tourists' perceptions of Appalachian culture. My intent to conduct surveys with gallery visitors was to solicit possible correlations between their perceptions of culture and their interactions with Appalachian paintings. The second survey asked artists and gallery coordinators/owners to provide data on the market performance of the gallery. Figures for the yearly volume of sales and attendance numbers were collected and analyzed to generate a range of the size and scope of economic activities for selected galleries. Combined, these two surveys provide sufficient quantitative data to complement and enhance the validity of qualitative data provided by interviews and observations. See Appendix E for both sets of survey questions.

Responding to the call made by scholars to study the experience, agendas, knowledge, and demands of tourists (Edensor 1998; Jansen-Verbeke 1997; Prentice

1997), I was committed to recruiting tourists for participation in this project. “Tourist/s” refers to a wide ranging group of people marked by their placement in the front region of the tourism setting as defined by MacCannell (1976). Anyone I encountered whose purpose for visiting Mountainville and its galleries was for leisure was considered a tourist. Those folks who worked in the back region of the tourist setting, housekeeping staff, security alarm service people, vending machine attendants, city employees, business owners, etc., if visiting the galleries while performing work in these roles, were not considered to be tourists. These back region actors, however, could and sometimes did enter the front region of the galleries in the role of tourist, and in those moments, their experience was counted as tourist experiences. Such a wide definition of tourists maximized my opportunity to discover diversity among tourists’ education backgrounds, places of residence, income levels, frequency of visits, activities during visits, etc.

Early in the research schedule, I randomly selected five galleries/ festivals at which I would conduct tourist surveys. These surveys contained eight closed and open ended questions pertaining to visitors’ purchases during their stay in Mountainville and visitors’ perceptions of local culture. Several months into my research project, I realized that the galleries selected were not the most appropriate sites to conduct surveys. Mostly, the selected galleries did not receive consistent or reliable numbers of visitors, making surveys too time consuming. Additionally, there existed too much similarity among the selected galleries, although the selection method was random. Therefore, based on my knowledge of the various galleries and festivals, I selected four galleries and one festival at which I conducted research surveys. These sites offered the best access to the tourists I

was targeting. Moreover, my project had already gained the support and permission from the gallery/ festival owners necessary to approach their customers.

Collecting data through surveys proved to be the most difficult methodology in this dissertation project. My goal for this project was 100 tourist surveys spanning the spring, summer, and fall tourist seasons. I experienced several unsuccessful attempts throughout the spring tourist season to solicit tourists to complete surveys while they perused the selected art festivals and galleries. I refined my approach by setting up an attractive table display with humorous signage (“Please help this poor college student!”) at the exit of galleries and festivals. Establishing a formalized space for survey research attracted visitors. Once they approached my table, I explained my purposes and expectations, and I stressed the brevity of the survey questions and the anonymity of the data collected. After hearing my explanation, visitors then decided whether to complete the survey. Many people cited time constraints, physical discomfort, and disinterest as reasons for deciding not to complete the surveys. Those visitors that did complete the survey were rewarded with a piece of candy. This strategy of survey respondent recruitment enabled me to obtain a total of 486 completed surveys.

Three hundred seventy-four (374) surveys were collected at a summer and fall craftsman’s fair. The fair draws 1900-3900 people a day. Hundreds of vendors sell pottery, purses, jellies, furniture, music albums, glassworks, clothes, wind chimes, and some paintings and prints. Because the survey return rate at this fair was low and not statistically reliable, I chose not to include surveys collected at the fair in the statistical research analysis. Moreover, the craftsman’s fair survey is not representative of the local Mountainville art market. There are more gallery venues available to Mountainville

tourists for art purchases than there are arts and crafts fairs. Also, the craftsman's fair draws regional craftsmen and artists not from Mountainville which makes it a less representative setting in which to observe the actors and the stage specific to Mountainville's art market. Nonetheless, scanning through this body of surveys gave me some indication of tourists' ideas about "Appalachia" and of their preference for hand-made items. Conducting surveys at this venue also provided opportunity to record in my fieldnotes interactions with and observations of artists, craftspeople, and tourists in a large commercial space.

The remaining 112 surveys were collected from four separate galleries. I spent three days each at two galleries during the summer (June/July) tourist season, and three days each at two other galleries during the fall (September/October) tourist season. During four weekends in June and July and one weekday, I collected thirty-five completed surveys from Ledge Leapers Gallery, and twenty completed surveys from the Jane Kennedy Smith Gallery. During three weekends and two weekdays in September and October, I collected thirty completed surveys from the Greg Wright Gallery and twenty-seven completed surveys from the Rocky River Gallery. Survey collections were scheduled on days that gallery owners recommended and on days that accommodated gallery schedules. Out of the twelve separate days spent at the galleries, there were five Saturdays, three Fridays, two Wednesdays, one Thursday, and one Monday. Weekends were highly recommended by gallery owners as the best opportunities for large volumes of gallery visitors. According to visitor counts, the 112 surveys were collected from approximately 550 gallery visitors.

Systematic analysis of the surveys collected at galleries did not begin during the collection period. In an effort to ensure that questions are answerable and effective, I scanned all returned surveys. Subsequently, I made minor modifications to the survey form to increase its readability and clarity.

The second survey I conducted measured gallery sales performance. At the end of the research period in January 2006, I surveyed ten galleries for information regarding their economic performances for 2005. Galleries surveyed represent a range of presence in the local art market. For example, four galleries in this survey sample were located in downtown Mountainville amidst the highest concentration of visitors to the city. Downtown Mountainville is recognized as a three mile stretch of multi-level buildings containing shops, eateries, and attractions. The downtown area is best navigated by foot as most businesses do not offer parking. Business hours for most of the proprietors are mid-morning to late evening (10:00am to 11:00pm). Four other galleries in this performance survey were located three miles beyond the downtown area in a neighborhood that promotes itself as an arts and crafts community.

This community is composed of galleries/ studios, shops, eateries, and residences sporadically located within an eight mile driving loop. Businesses in this loop are generally open mid-morning to early evening (10:00am to 5:00pm or 6:00pm). Most of the shops in this community are managed by the artist/ owner and it is not surprising if the artist/owner also lives at his/her shop. Moreover, this neighborhood, in an effort to promote its locally-made craft items, lobbied the city government of Mountainville to instate strict city zoning codes that regulate the origin of products offered in the shops; according to these city ordinances, 51 percent of total inventory must be produced on site.

Although the enforcement of such ordinances is nearly absent, this community does differ from downtown Mountainville where the bulk of products sold are manufactured overseas. The remaining two galleries in this performance survey are located twenty miles from Mountainville in satellite towns developing their tourism industry. Most visitors leaving Mountainville to return home will pass through one of these two towns because of the limited access to federal interstate highways.

The galleries in this survey also represent multiple histories with the local art market. Four of the galleries have represented local artists for over thirty years. Four others have only been in business for one year or less. Indeed, two art galleries opened in April 2005 (survey was conducted in January 2006). Many galleries are owned and operated by the artist exhibited. Eight of the ten galleries participating in the performance survey are artist-owned and operated. Some galleries serve as studio space as well. Seventeen of the twenty-one artists interviewed for this project also own and operate their galleries. Thus, the structure of the Mountainville art market is void of dealer/artists relationships typical of larger and more centered art markets such as New York and Chicago.

Although painters in Mountainville might supplement their gallery inventories with other art forms (glass, ceramics), I did not encounter an artist owned gallery which represented other painters, unless the additional artist was a family member or the painter/gallery owner had retired from painting (Fieldnotes). Half of the ten galleries included in the gallery sales performance survey carried paintings from just one painter who also owned the gallery. Three of the galleries each carried work from the artist/owner and one or two additional artists. Two galleries included in this gallery sales

performance survey were owned by non-artists. One of these non-artist owned galleries actually carried paintings from close to twenty-five artists, while the other carried just two painters. For those few artists who did not own their galleries, no mention was made of exclusionary contracts limiting the artist to representation by one or two galleries. Indeed, painters without their own galleries sought and recruited many outlets, including restaurants, hotels, shops, and galleries, to exhibit their work.

These ten galleries employed few workers. Numbers range from one to four employees working weekly schedules within the galleries. Four galleries employed one person, the artist/owner. Three galleries employed two persons. The remaining three galleries employed three to four employees within the gallery itself, but these galleries also operated frame shops which increased the total number of employees to four to seven.

Galleries differ in square footage. This project did not record exact areas of gallery spaces. Estimations provide a sense of the scale of space. The smallest gallery was approximately 200 square feet with the largest gallery approximately 7,000 square feet. Most galleries were within a range of approximately 700 to 1,000 square feet.

The galleries participating in the performance survey additionally differ in the type and content of the art objects they exhibit, although the romantically realist style prevails. Most of these galleries offer art that represents local scenes, yet there are five galleries that offer additional art that represents non-local scenes. Finally, eight of these galleries offer art in mediums besides two-dimensional paintings.

These performance surveys indicate the vast range of volume of sales and visitor numbers that galleries in the Mountainville area may achieve. For the 2005 calendar year,

each of these ten galleries reported volume of sales from less than \$10,000 to over \$600,000. The average volume of sales is \$231,100.00 with median sales of \$150,000.00. Each gallery estimated visitor counts for each of the four seasons (winter, spring, summer, and autumn). Summer and autumn experience the highest levels of visitation, but not all surveyed galleries could estimate autumn visitor counts. Because some galleries were not in business during the winter and spring seasons, summer estimates provide the best points of comparison. Visitor counts in each of the ten galleries ranged from three persons per day to two hundred persons per day with an average of 110 persons and a median of 125 persons per day. These gallery performance surveys also enable research correlations to be made between volume of sales and strategies employed by galleries to attract customers. Three of the four top grossing galleries built reputations for the quality of art based on design and skill levels of the artist they represent over a thirty year period. Their marketing strategies include word-of-mouth and mailing lists. One of these galleries also created a collectors club which contributes to the demand for the specific art prints selected for collectors. Other top grossing galleries, \$300,000 and higher, occupy locations in heavy tourist foot traffic. More people see their products daily. Additionally, one of these two galleries trains its gallery workers to facilitate sales.

Observations

Recorded observations of the field site were ongoing. General, everyday field site observations include my reflections on community events, bits of conversation with artists and tourists, physical descriptions of community space, minutes of two meetings of a regional art guild, frequency counts of gallery/festival visitors, lists of local television visitor channel commercials, and inventories of adjacent shops operating in

Mountainville's downtown district and the more rural arts and crafts community. In addition, I collected pamphlets, newspaper clippings, bulletins, and other papers indicating the character of Mountainville's tourism economy.

Time allocation studies using spot sampling in randomly selected galleries were conducted in seven galleries and lasted between 30 minutes to 120 minutes and occurred during the gallery's afternoon business hours, usually between 12:00pm and 5:00pm. Through these observations, I listed the primary activities of visitors as they moved around the gallery space and interacted with gallery workers and other visitors. Primary activities of the artist/ gallery worker while the visitor was in the gallery space were also recorded. I took notes of the dialogue between visitors and gallery workers which provided good data of the reactions visitors expressed towards the art, as well as the attempts of gallery workers to engage the visitor with the art.

During time allocation studies, the layout of gallery space was also recorded and used to compare retail spaces. Once the observations of gallery activities were complete, the data was thematically coded and used anecdotally to support assertions presented in this research. Because the timed allocation and observation procedures were conducted at seven galleries, I was able to conduct a comparative perspective of the commodity of space, the ritualized behavior of visitors and workers, and the commodification of personal relationship between the artist, worker, and/or art and visitor.

Participant-Observation

In addition to data derived from interviews, content analysis, surveys, and observation, this research collected data through participant-observation. On several occasions during field research, I visited galleries and gift shops with the intent to make a

purchase for a family member or friend. On these occasions I entered the same ritualized behavior of the consumption process as other visitors and witnessed the performative strategies employed by artists or gallery workers. Some of these retail spaces did not carry paintings or prints, so there was no benefit to explaining my research to the proprietors. In these cases, I was able to participate in the marketing strategies and consumption practices of non-art sectors in the tourism retail industry.

Perhaps the most useful data derived from this research procedure was obtained while I was an employee in a gallery located in downtown Mountainville. I spent approximately five months spread out over Christmas, summer, and fall seasons working as an art sales person. My official title was “art consultant.” I was trained to build relationships with gallery visitors so that they could be transformed into clients, indicating a more personal relationship than with that of a customer. I was also trained to consider my sales position as one of service designed to bring beauty, joy, peace, and other positive emotions into clients’ homes or offices. In my training, I was instructed to act as informant to gallery visitors about various art styles, different qualities of prints, and background and intent of the painters whose work I represented. I was also trained how to best display a painting, how to best create an environment conducive to a positive reaction from the viewer, and how to maximize the probability of finalizing a sale. I practiced these strategies throughout my tenure as an art consultant and offer this data in detail in Chapter Eight.

Time Line

This project began in January 2005 with general observations and gallery visits and ended in October 2006 with participant-observation as an art consultant in a

downtown Mountainville gallery. Spring months proved to be a convenient time for many artists and gallery workers to meet with me. Thus, interviews were scheduled early in the research period and continued throughout the project time line, although fewer interviews were conducted during July through October. The summer and fall months attract the highest volume of visitors and are considered the heights of the tourist season. Most of the gallery visitor surveys were conducted during June, July, September, and October. Content analysis of gallery paintings and timed gallery observations began in February 2005 and were consistently conducted until January 2006. The gallery performance surveys were conducted in January 2006 so that respondents would be able to report 2005 yearly economic levels.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRODUCING THE MODELS: PAINTERS AND GALLERY WORKERS

Anthropology is about the lives of people. Such a focus on the human experience with rich detail and lively description is a hallmark of the ethnographic research that anthropologists contribute to science and humanities. To follow in the footsteps of anthropologists before me, I present in this chapter stories from some of the artists and gallery workers I met while conducting research in Mountainville. The purpose of sharing these stories and conveying the richness, the complexity, and the insight these lives reveal is to explore what it means to be an artist and a gallery owner/manager in a tourist economy.

In order to establish context to this project, I provide a reflective account of my journey to Mountainville, both physically and intellectually. I grew up forty-five miles from Mountainville in an adjacent county. Mountainville is close enough to my hometown that our high schools compete in sports and many of my hometown's residents, including my family, visit Mountainville for the day or for a weekend. Yet, Mountainville is also far enough away that I cannot recall anyone commuting from my hometown to work in Mountainville, nor did I ever encounter any individual from my hometown who was also active in Mountainville's civic or social networks. Hence, at the beginning of this research project, I knew very little about the social, political, economic, and historical dynamics at play in Mountainville. What I did know from my experience growing up nearby was that Mountainville was a popular tourist destination that took advantage of its proximity to a national park and promoted itself as a gateway to mountains and to mountain culture.

Mountainville's promotion of mountain culture, Appalachian culture, caught my

attention as a graduate student exploring Foucault's ideas of subjectivities and Marx's ideas about commodity fetishism. The relationship among these three things, Appalachia, subjectivities, and commodities, lies in the ways people from the region are represented and in the ways these representations become merchandise. I am also interested in the communicative qualities of the visual forms of art. Examining the art work in Mountainville provided the opportunity to see the relationship between commodities of and representations of Appalachian culture.

I designed my research to examine how stereotypes were communicated through the tourist art in Mountainville. In addition to the probe and penetration of my anthropological inquiry, discussions about art, with art's culturally prescribed subjectivity, solicited much dialogue and reflection from my participants. What I discovered was the complexity of artists' motivations for painting and for doing business in Mountainville's art industry. I learned a great deal about the artists themselves and how they cope with tourists, with managing their businesses, and with their needs for creative expression. From gallery owners/managers, I learned about the ways through which Mountainville's art market is constructed and stimulated. Much of what is for sale in the art market is informed by gallery owners/managers' interpretations about consumer behavior and preferences. They select paintings from artists who produce subjects depicting local scenes in realistic styles because these sorts of subjects and styles are what the gallery owners/managers believe their customers want to purchase. The processes by which artists and gallery owners/managers undergo to supply the market reveal the extent to which they themselves are consumers of market driven tastes.

Woven through the stories recounted here is evidence of the conundrum of

authenticity and the degree of agency one evokes within the flow of market goods. Artists paint a narrow body of subjects because they earnestly enjoy painting these subjects and/or because they believe tourists will only buy these subjects. Likewise, gallery owners/managers select paintings to sell in their galleries based on what subjects they believe tourists are looking for. Further complicating the conundrum, both artists and gallery owners/managers act as consumers of iconic subjects even though formally they serve as market producers of art goods. They differ from the formal role of market consumers in that their ability to avoid or minimize economic risks and market uncertainties is crucial to their livelihood. Much of what I learned from the artists and gallery owners/managers pertains to the way they have penetrated and sustained their market positions. Here are their stories.

Jane Kennedy Smith⁵

I met Jane in her gallery at the end of February. I had just started my research and was visiting galleries, shops, and studios to become familiar with the art market in Mountainville. I visited Jane's gallery because I had randomly selected it for the content analysis component of my research methodology. Her gallery was also located in a prominent spot along the artists loop.

Being February, the weather was cold and overcast. Mountainville does not get a lot of snow, but it has many dreary winter days when the air is damp and chilling. Jane's gallery looked like a pioneer cabin with a large wooden porch and a low angled roof⁶.

The large front windows oozed a warm and inviting light from within the gallery. It was a

⁵ All place, organization, business, and personal names are pseudonyms.

⁶ Since I met Jane, she has moved her gallery twice and is currently located in a new retail space at the beginning of the artists loop. Her newest gallery does not resemble historical log cabin architecture.

Friday afternoon after the President's Day weekend during which Mountainville experienced a small surge of visitors. Few tourists were around, however, when I walked into the gallery.

My first impression of Jane's art space was of the large wooden door that led entrance into the gallery. It had an old fashioned handle that lifted to open. The door squeaked as if to announce my arrival. Inside the gallery, music of the psaltery, a traditional string instrument with a high harp sound, was being played from the stereo system. The gallery walls displayed several forms of Jane's art including painted canvases, tole painted wood and slate, and calligraphy poems and sayings on paper.

Jane was to the left of the door behind the counter that served as the place of sale. She was casually dressed wearing a plaid blouse and dark pants. Jane greeted me warmly and encouraged me to look around the gallery. I meandered along images of mountains, rivers, cabins, birds, and flowers until I completed the gallery circle. I then explained to Jane that I was an anthropology graduate student living in the community to understand how tourism affects the kind of art that artists produce and the kind of art that tourists purchase.

Jane was very interested in my research questions then and throughout my stay in the field. She not only obliged me with a long interview and permission to include her gallery in my content analysis, she enthusiastically asked about my research and always wanted to know what new things I had learned. This kind of encouragement allowed me to discuss my ideas with Jane and learn from her experience as an artist and a businesswoman about the challenges artists face in a tourism industry. Jane's story is echoed throughout my research.

Jane is a 58 year old oil painter who grew up in New England. She took art classes in high school, and she attended an art school in Boston for two years. Jane took employment as a commercial artist in advertising, but found the work very unexciting. After five years, Jane chose to leave her commercial art job in order to raise her two little children. She turned an empty room in her house into a studio and started painting for herself.

In the mid-1970s, Jane was divorced and forced to find work outside of the home. She also needed to find cheaper materials on which to paint. Being in New England presented a surplus of slate for Jane's art. Neighbors would give their old slate roof tiles to Jane, and she and her children would clean them, paint them, and sell them at craft fairs.

In the mid-1980s, Jane reacquainted with her former boss from the advertising department. They got married and in 1990 decided to trade in the cold and snowy weather of New England for the South.

We checked out Asheville, North Carolina. Our accountant said to check it out, [because] they're still prosperous there. It was very bad economic times up in [New England]. That's when mortgage rates went up to 20 percent. Another friend said check out East Tennessee. "It's the most beautiful place on earth" [Jane's friend said]. And another friend was really hot on Branson, Missouri. So we started in Asheville and we met a craftsperson [there], who said "You ought to check out [Mountainville.] There's a lot of artists there." So we did and we immediately fell in love, but we were committed to go to Branson. So we went to Branson and were chased by tornadoes all the way. We scratched Branson, said let's go back to [Mountainville], and then we did. This all took place within a matter of two weeks. We packed the tent. We were tenting at the time. We were young enough to sleep on the ground. So we ended up here, and we rented a house, one street over. We lived there for three years, and then we bought an old

farmhouse out in the county and that's how I ended up here (Interview JKS).

Eventually, Jane developed a wholesale business for her slate paintings. She and her husband shipped to gifts shops all over the country. At one point, they employed eighteen sales reps and additional painters, but Jane found the work unsatisfying.

Of course, I didn't get to do any of the stuff I like to do. It was all hack work, but the other side was that I get to stay home and take lots of breaks and go and smell my flowers...so it was a trade off...stay home...do that nasty artwork...the same thing a hundred million times (Interview JKS).

Currently, Jane and her husband are out of the wholesale business and are the only employees of their gallery. Jane finds much more satisfaction in painting the subjects and the styles she wants to paint.

Jane considers herself to be a real artist, but understands the hurdles that women artists, in particular, experience. According to Jane, the art world is dominated by males—a trend that can be observed locally in Mountainville's unbalanced ratio of male to female artists. Women painters are often seen as hobbyists without much potential for professional status. Of course, many women artists, like Jane, challenge these notions and penetrate the local art market. Jane hides her gender behind her initials, however. She named her gallery the JK Gallery so that passersby might assume her gallery contained a male artist's work. She sees this as an advantageous strategy to attract visitors and potential patrons.

Jane's story illustrates themes of my research. She is an artist motivated by self gratification. She finds painting a pleasurable alternative to wage labor, and prefers not to paint for production only. Her background includes formal art training and experience in

advertising and graphic design. Jane is economically minded and employs strategies to make her work sellable. These characteristics are indicated in the fact that Jane and her husband relocated from a distant region of the U.S. to Mountainville because of the area's natural beauty, which inspires Jane to paint, and because of the area's tourist economy, which presents opportunity for Jane's financial success.

Derrick Effler

I happened upon Derrick Effler's paintings while conducting a content analysis in a cooperative gallery. His paintings fit the category of impressionism and depict local landscape scenes. When I inquired about Derrick, I was told by a gallery co-owner that he was a very friendly man who would be quite interested in my project. I was also told that he was a local artist, a private art teacher, and sympathetic to student causes. I was encouraged to contact him.

I mailed an introduction letter to Derrick that explained my research and invited him to speak with me. He enthusiastically agreed to talk with me. I have since realized that most of the artists I met were very willing to share their stories. Derrick and I agreed to meet in his studio at his home in mid-October.

Upon my arrival to Derrick's home, he immediately greeted me. Derrick was friendly and energetic. Wearing a blue denim work shirt with sleeves rolled up, he looked as if he had already been busy in his studio. He led me into and around his house and talked about his normal and repetitive daily schedule. He then showed me his studio located on the ground level. I was amazed at how ordered, organized, and clean the studio was. Drawers were labeled and there was plenty of free space in which to move and work. Contrasting other artists' studios, Derrick's lacked clutter and chaos. It was

brightly lit from the large window, and I did not have to move anything to find a space for my tape recorder. It was easy to observe that Derrick values discipline and organization.

From our interview I learned that Derrick is almost 60 years old and believes in taking opportunities whenever they are presented. Originally from New England, Derrick received a college degree in mechanical engineering and has worked most of his life in that field, although he has not limited himself to engineering. Derrick has also worked part-time as a grocer and a farmer.

His entry into the art business occurred after a customer in his health food grocery store in 1970 encouraged him to take a painting workshop. After attending the workshop, Derrick returned to his grocery with a “For Sale” sign and from that moment on became a part-time painter while maintaining his engineering job. For the next thirty years, Derrick studied with many nationally-known painters, attending their workshops in order to refine his techniques. Upon deciding to try his hand at gentleman farming, Derrick quit the engineering job for a while and bought acreage in Central Kentucky. After a few years of farming, while painting part-time, Derrick went back to engineering for its more steady income. Derrick secured an engineering job in the late 1980s near Mountainville that paid an \$80,000 salary. He and his wife felt at home in the Mountainville area because the landscape reminded them of New England, without the high taxes and the brutal winters. After ten years, Derrick left his engineering job for good. He taught computer science, geometry, and art in a local Christian school.

Currently, Derrick focuses his time and energy on painting, making prints of his work, and teaching. Derrick is a print industry enthusiast and encourages painters to

produce prints of their work for the market. He actually printed many of Mountainville artists' work, although this aspect of his business has declined to make room in Derrick's schedule to teach his own workshops around the country. Because of his own workshop-based arts education, Derrick believes that artists should never be self-taught and advocates continuing arts education in technique and in materials. Derrick also believes that one cannot even learn art in college and that an artist must learn from someone who is doing art, from someone's experience. Thus, Derrick justifies his own teaching and the energy he exerts to organize and facilitate workshops.

The work relationships from Derrick's print business and workshop teaching bring their own set of opportunities. For example, Derrick received the opportunity to exhibit and sell his work in a gallery owned and operated by an artist whose work Derrick printed. Although Derrick sells a lot of his work nationally and does not depend on the local tourism market for his livelihood, the sales of his work from this local gallery were a welcomed addition to his income. For another example, many of Derrick's workshops are sponsored by paint, canvas, and printer manufacturers who supply materials for Derrick to use- lessening his production costs. These workshops also facilitate sales of Derrick's work with his students who purchase demonstration paintings.

A rather philosophical painter, Derrick values painting as an analytical and creative process. He sees painters that paint for the market as entertainers. Painting for the public, according to Derrick, does not push one's art. He classifies himself as an impressionist painter. Such painters focus on capturing their subject quickly so as not to lose the impression of the light, the shape, or the movement of the subject. Derrick sometimes wants to "get in and get the painting done" (Interview DE). Twelve to sixteen

hours is the maximum amount of time he devotes to a painting which differs from fellow painters who may devote 500 hours to a painting. He believes his quick painting style is a reflection of his personality- one that is energetic and proud to take risks.

Derrick's story taught me that some artists in Mountainville are not directly dependent on the tourist industry, but sell their work locally to supplement their national sales. This orientation to the national market frees artists from tourists' demands and allows artists to produce art that expresses more theoretical content. I also learned that many artists devalue their formal art education and find more useful knowledge from their own trial-and-error experience or from the experience of other working artists. Finally, Derrick represents artists who are attracted to the perceived freedom associated with the profession of artist. Although Derrick values organization and discipline, he values more the spontaneity and fleeting moments his art production allows him to experience. This value is reflected in Derrick's many career endeavors and in his identification as an impressionist painter.

Lizbeth Baldwin

Lizbeth Baldwin is a watercolor painter who prefers to paint birds and wild flowers local to Mountainville. Unlike Jane and Derrick, Lizbeth is a Mountainville native. Her grandmother was a member of Mountainville's founding clan, and Lizbeth's father was raised in an area that is now part of the national park. Growing up in Mountainville, Lizbeth was exposed to people from all over the U.S. Specifically, she recalls meeting folks from Ohio, Florida, and New York as a child.

I met Lizbeth after seeing her watercolors in the same gallery that I saw Derrick's paintings. I learned in an interview I conducted with Lizbeth that she is one of the co-

owners of the gallery. Throughout the course of my fieldwork experience, Lizbeth and her business partners, like Jane, became reliable participants. I visited their gallery many times. They gave me updates on their business activity, invited me to their community arts shows and auctions, and gave me feedback on what I was learning.

It was mid-spring when I first visited Lizbeth in the studio space at her co-owned gallery. The wild flowers were in full bloom in Mountainville, and Lizbeth was very excited to show me some of her more recent paintings of trillium, lady slippers, and bluebirds. The studio space is located above the gallery. It provides a space where demonstrations can be given and where the owners of the gallery (all of whom are artists and craftspeople) can produce some of their work. It also serves as a break room. As we talked, the fragrant mountain breeze fluttered the wind chimes hanging by the window, and I could hear the ding-a-ling of the bell on the door below whenever a visitor entered the gallery.

Lizbeth has never moved away from Mountainville. She worked for a long time in the restaurant business as a member of the wait staff at a mediocre establishment in downtown Mountainville. The tourist economy in Mountainville offers mostly service jobs with average to low paying wages to local residents. As a server, Lizbeth learned how to develop a rapport with customers that minimized customer grievances and prevented confrontations- protecting Lizbeth's own contentment. She reflects her "treat them with over-kindness before they have a chance to be rude" mentality in her laid back and friendly demeanor. Based on her experience working in Mountainville, Lizbeth prefers to interact with the visitors to the artists loop rather than those who spend their time at the downtown shops and attractions. Lizbeth describes the artists loop visitors as

friendly and genuinely interested in arts and crafts, and much more pleasant to talk with.

Lizbeth started painting craft items as a hobby. During a local craft fair, Lizbeth painted Halloween scenes on pumpkins. Her scenes were well received, and she was persuaded by a friend to paint on dried gourds; thus, her scenes would be more permanent. Soon Lizbeth's subjects changed from Halloween themes to birds and flowers. Lizbeth cleaned, varnished, and painted hundreds of gourds. When the opportunity to establish a cooperative arts and crafts gallery arose in 1995, Lizbeth joined with five other artists and exhibited her painted gourds. Lizbeth began to paint on watercolor paper when a customer mentioned that she would prefer Lizbeth's paintings on a flat and framable surface rather than a three-dimensional gourd. This change of canvas indicates to Lizbeth that her art is taking over her craft- a shift that makes Lizbeth feel validated.

Although Lizbeth has been painting for many years, she has received no formal art education. She identifies herself as a self-taught artist and recognizes that her style might be different from trained artists. In her paintings, Lizbeth emphasizes the details of flowers and birds and usually works from photographs so as not to forget particular features of her subjects. In beginning a painting, Lizbeth starts with one idea and does not construct an elaborate vision of the final painting. She believes in allowing the painting to dictate and have a life of its own. Lizbeth chooses to paint with watercolor because of the challenge the medium offers. Lizbeth truly enjoys painting and thinks it is fun work. Indeed, a major motivation for Lizbeth is the enjoyment she receives when she paints and the enjoyment other people express when they purchase her work.

Lizbeth made it clear to me in our conversation that she really values doing what

she loves and what is challenging to her. She also admitted that earning a living to support her teenage and young adult children is equally important. To reconcile these two priorities, Lizbeth developed a price point formula that enables her to be compensated for the time she devotes to a painting- resulting in making money for what she loves to do. Lizbeth accounts for \$10.00 an hour for her labor for each piece. Requiring absolute discipline, Lizbeth is careful not to spend too much time on a painting so that the resulting price is too high. Having a sense of what people will spend helps Lizbeth segment her time per piece to stay within an affordable price range. She clocks her time cleaning, varnishing, and painting gourds. In order to keep gourd prices around \$35.00, Lizbeth admits that she spends a shorter amount of time painting the gourds. Thus, she feels her gourd paintings are more generic in subject matter. Her watercolor paper paintings, with greater detailing, take more time and cost more.

Lizbeth also assess those art pieces in the gallery that do not sell after six months. Considering if they are overpriced, damaged, unpopular subjects, or in a mismatched frame, Lizbeth changes them to make them sellable. If the piece does not sell, she donates it or gives it to someone. Never does she discount or markdown the price of her work. This pricing strategy was carried out by other artists, too, and is based on the perception that discounting a particular art piece makes the entire body of art seem less valuable to the buyer.

From my conversations with Lizbeth, I learned that artists are business-minded people, especially given the amount of effort that Lizbeth devotes to pricing her work. Learning from Lizbeth helped me to focus on the strategies that artists in Mountainville employ to sell their work. Examining such strategies is a major theme of this research.

Daniel Rosinski

Daniel's gallery is a part of the artists loop and is located in a strip mall of arts and crafts shops on a major artery connecting Mountainville to an interstate highway. His gallery sets back and low from the road, however, and may be easily missed by car traffic. Fortunately, the density of shops in that location draws visitors, and many of Daniel's customers find him by merely walking in (Fieldnotes). The outside of his gallery resembles an historical pioneer cabin with natural wood planks and a covered front porch- much like Jane's gallery described above. Daniel's gallery is on the end of a long row of retail spaces that share this architectural theme. Adjacent to the gallery is a separate building that houses a popular and multi-generational pottery business. Placement near this pottery business also helps to bring customers into Daniel's gallery.

When I first walked into Daniel Rosinski's gallery, the smallness of the space was surprising to me. Roughly a square area, the front wall contains a large store front window and the entrance, and the two side walls of the gallery are lined with Daniel's watercolors, framed and matted. Easels in corners and slanted bins in the middle of the gallery display or hold prints of Daniel's work. In the back of the gallery, the sales counter separates the public viewing space from the private working space. In this work space, I could see framing and matting equipment and materials. Easy listening music punctuated the gallery and contributed to a peaceful atmosphere.

Daniel and his wife were busy cutting mats and moving prints ready to be framed. They do all of the printing, matting, and framing of Daniel's paintings. Daniel is in his mid-sixties and was surprised to hear that I was interested in his story. He is a humble man with a jolly personality and dry wit. Daniel wears a beard, and I shared with him my

theory about male artists and beards. I had noticed up to this point in my research that all of the male painters wore beards. Some beards were shorter than others, but I was beginning to wonder if it was a requirement to wear a beard in order to be a painter in Mountainville. Upon hearing my theory, Daniel told me the reason for his beard: “Someone said that I looked like my sister. So I grew a beard, (comic pause)...then she grew a beard!” (Interview DR). Such a relaxed and humorous attitude helps Daniel and his wife deal with the daily demands of running their gallery business.

Daniel’s story differs from Lizbeth because Daniel claims he is not a good businessman. He does not spend the amount of effort that Lizbeth spends on figuring price points or that other artists spend on choosing subject matter preferred by tourists. The marketing of Daniel’s work is done willy-nilly, and both Daniel and his wife claim not to advertise much more than being listed in the artists loop pamphlet and map. Daniel is a painter attentive to process of art creation. The experience of painting is important to Daniel. He sees art as a struggle to get that perfect image in his head down through his brush and paint and onto the canvas. During his painting process, Daniel is always experimenting and evolving the use of pigment, lighting, and shapes.

Indeed, Daniel and his wife moved to Mountainville almost thirty years ago because of the shapes and lighting of the local landscape. As with many of the artists I encountered, Daniel’s creativity is stimulated by the area. He fancies painting the mountains and local landscapes. Tourists to the area also fancy these subjects and provide a ready-made market for Daniel’s work. Although he claims not to paint subjects he thinks art buyers want, Daniel admits that he does not resist the market. “What I see and have interest in, seems to interest other people” (Interview DR). Daniel asserts that he is

“more interested in pleasing [his] interest than pleasing other people” (Interview DR).

Originally from the Chicago area, Daniel and his wife visited Mountainville a few times for vacations in the 1970s. Daniel worked as a lab technician and color matcher for a plastics company. Additionally, he repaired equipment and machinery around the plant giving him the reputation that he could fix anything. This ability to problem-solve is a theme in Daniel’s artistic production. In addition to working in a color lab, Daniel was a part-time musician. He played the guitar in a popular local band, plucking out big band melodies and show tunes for weddings, restaurants, and private parties. Although Daniel retired his guitar playing, he was committed to artistic expression and focused more on painting.

His first painting sold to a bank manager who requested a large piece representing the sand dunes along Lake Michigan. Daniel reminisced with me about how absolutely thrilling it was to sell his first painting. This feeling of success was expanded when he took a portfolio of his work to a Chicago gallery. According to Daniel, the owners of the gallery did not want to see his paintings. But when they did see Daniel’s work, they bought all of it on the spot. Moreover, they sold all of his paintings in their gallery, plus they started a waiting list of customers who wanted more of his pieces. This level of success was repeated when Daniel first opened his Mountainville gallery and sold half of his paintings to one gentleman. Now Daniel’s “paintings are all over the world including England, Japan, Australia, South America, but not in Antarctica” as he teases me (Interview DR). Truly, these successful sales are unique to Daniel’s career as an artist. Other painters I spoke with recounted stories of one or two major sales on the same day, but never to the volume of sale that Daniel reported.

And yet, Daniel does not see himself as a successful businessman. Rather he identifies as a self-taught artist, who considers his emotions towards a subject and who tries to paint on canvas the resulting vision in his mind. Daniel strives to be an impressionist, but thinks he might be a realist painter. He follows the styles of famous landscape painters including John Singer Sargent, Andrew Wyett, Robert Wade, and impressionistic watercolorist David Taylor. “Being an artist is enjoyable [to Daniel]. My art is an expression of how I feel about something to someone else” (Interview DR). Daniel also identifies as a local artist with his longevity (32 years) in the local art market giving him credibility as such.

Daniel’s story reminded me throughout my time in the field that the subjects many artists love to paint match those subjects that tourists love to look at. His story illustrates a very important theme of this research project. Despite market forces that influence the art market of Mountainville, there are plenty of artists whose agency and creative powers are more likely to motivate the painting process. Production decisions for artists like Daniel, and for Jane described above, rest on their own meanings and desires. Of course, securing a livelihood is very important to these artists, so they do not ignore the market completely. Daniel, however, represents those artists who spend minimal resources to publicize their art or to attract customers. Complicating the presumption that during the painting process artists are influenced only by the market, Daniel’s story shows a mutual relationship between the enjoyment and self-gratification which the process of painting can bring to the artist and the subjects the local art market bears.

Shawn Newcomb

Shawn represents a different kind of artist from Daniel. Shawn Newcomb is a

painter who says he is much more focused on meeting the emotional demands of the tourist in order to sell his work and is less focused on the self-enjoyment he might receive from painting. Such focus is not meant to imply that Shawn dislikes painting. Indeed, he left a career as an architect because he became apathetic and because painting offered him tranquility.

Shawn is from Memphis. At an early age, he showed aptitude for drawing and was encouraged by his family to pursue architecture. Although Shawn did not care for architecture, he continued as an architect until the events of September 11, 2001 forced a decline in the construction industry. Shawn took this as a chance to venture towards a new career. Now, in his mid-forties and three years into his career as an artist, Shawn produces acrylic paintings of landscapes, wildlife, landmarks, and building- all local to Mountainville and the nearby national park. At least four different galleries throughout the area carry Shawn's work. He paints, prints, mattes, and frames all of his products while continuing computer autoCAD work for local construction companies on the side.

Shawn is a self-taught artist- beyond what he learned in his architecture training. He believes the art content taught in formal art institutions cannot be produced for successful sales in the Mountainville art market. No abstract or theoretical art appeals to the tourists that Shawn encounters. According to Shawn, "people [are] looking for the feeling they get when they hike in the [mountains] or when they take a photograph" (Interview SN). Specifically, Shawn is convinced that art patrons are looking for peace and serenity they can take with them back to their "rat races" and daily lives. Shawn feels a sense of peacefulness when he is out taking photographs or sketching subjects for his paintings, and he tries to reflect such a mood in his work.

Shawn categorizes his painting style as romantic realism. He values realistic proportion and precise, clear lines over the suggested, and according to Shawn “sloppy,” marks that characterize Impressionism. Shawn believes his realistic art is more appreciated by tourists than impressionistic or abstract styles. In order to make his paintings more emotionally appealing to tourists, Shawn heightens the colors in his paintings, making them brighter and more striking. Taking a tip from a successful gallery owner, Shawn sometimes places in his paintings different species of brightly blooming trees that would not realistically bloom at the same time. Such a tactic produces the kind of painting that Shawn believes sells best to tourists.

When I interviewed Shawn, he was working in one of the galleries that carries his art. This working arrangement allows Shawn to earn some extra money and more importantly gives him the chance to present and emphasize his work to gallery visitors. Meeting with Shawn in this gallery and retail context afforded me the chance to see the ritualized performance that many artists undergo while engaging the gallery visitor.

Within minutes of the start of our interview, a group of ladies entered the gallery. Shawn greeted them and gave them some information about the gallery.

Shawn: “Hello! Y’all come on in.”

Visitor: “We’re were looking at the paintings outside first.”

Shawn: “We’ve got some neat stuff out there. Y’all been to the gallery before?”

Visitor: “Yes, I have and I’ve brought my [ladies] club today.”

Shawn: “Uh-oh! Is it a legal club?”

Ladies laugh.

Shawn: “Y’all come in and look around. We’ve got about better than a dozen local artists here. The first room here is mostly paintings of [Mountain] Cove. We’ve got [national park] landmarks you’ll recognize. We’ve got giclee prints which are nice prints, and we’ve got some smaller ones

down there by the window on the shelf. Got any questions, just let me know” (Interview SN).

In this exchange of dialogue, Shawn was friendly and teased the ladies just a little. This behavior made the interaction more personal, even fun. Shawn invited the ladies into the gallery and encouraged them to interact with the paintings. At the end of their visitors, some of the ladies did make purchases. Even during a point of sale when Shawn was sure that a customer did not give him her money (which occurred later in our interview), he was friendly and engaging. The performance of the artist does not allow the artist to be confrontational or argumentative even when the artist feels he/she has been wronged by the customer.

Selling his paintings is a major motivation for Shawn and leads him to prefer to engage with customers who he assumes might buy, instead of merely chit-chatting with tourists. Shawn relayed a story to me about a woman who talked to Shawn in great detail about her arthritis and other health ailments. Meanwhile, Shawn noticed a couple in the gallery looking slowly and methodically at his paintings. For fear of being rude to the woman, Shawn did not excuse himself, but continued to listen to her health complaints. After several minutes, the couple left without purchasing anything. Shawn is certain that had he engaged conversation with them and offered information about the paintings they were looking at, he would have facilitated and completed a sale.

To determine with whom he should approach, Shawn has developed categories of behavior of gallery visitors that corresponds to their probability of buying something. For example, Shawn told me that “if someone walks in and uses the word ‘beautiful’ for your art work, you’ll never sell a piece” (Interview SN). Apparently, Shawn is not the only one who keeps track of the behaviors of potential customers. Another gallery owner shared

his observations about probable customers with Shawn. His observations make up a chart that keeps track of visitor behavior. This chart is used to predict within the first few seconds of someone walking into the gallery whether he/she will purchase something. Hence, artists and gallery workers formulate a system of meaning comprising of coded and encoded behavior that signifies to the artist/gallery worker the role he/she will portray in the retail space of the gallery.

If a man walks into the gallery before his wife, there will be no sale. If the wife walks in before her husband, there is a better chance of a sale. If a man with kids and a wife walks in first, there will be no sale. If a retired couple comes in and she walks in first, there is a good chance for a sale. If he stays on the porch, it's a hard sale. If he comes in, there's a good chance for a sale. And the more they [the visitor] brag, the less they purchase. Instead of giving you money, [they'll] give you 'that a boy' [compliments] (Interview SN).

From Shawn's story, I learned that some painters chose their art careers because of disinterest and burn out from other careers. For these people, the risk of changing employment, and in Shawn's case, location, was worth taking. I also understood from Shawn's description of his painting process, that what artists think tourists want really can influence what artists paint and the style they paint. Shawn and Daniel, described above, represent opposite ends of a range of the relationship between market forces and individual agency which manifests in the paintings of the Mountainville tourist art market. Finally, my observations of Shawn interacting with gallery visitors forced me to examine the behavior within gallery spaces as ritualized performances complete with signifiers and meanings. This examination of performance is a major contribution of this research.

Joanna Hitch

Joanna is one of ten gallery owner/managers I interviewed during my stay in Mountainville. Originally from Central Appalachia, Joanna grew up in an urban environment and visited Mountainville often as a child. She remembers how downtown Mountainville was composed only of hotels, restaurants, and artists' studios and galleries. Joanna reported to me that she had always wanted to live in Mountainville because it was so close to mountains. Since her childhood, Joanna loved the mountains, and she found them peaceful.

Joanna moved to Mountainville in her early fifties to escape a high pressure job. Her children had grown, and Joanna was eager to move to the area which offered her inspiration and tranquility. To enable her move, Joanna agreed to be a business partner with a friend who wanted to open an art gallery. Her initial job duties were to network with local art suppliers and realtors and market the gallery's art works. After five years, Joanna now oversees the gallery's inventory, coordinates artists carried by the gallery, maintains bookkeeping, facilitates sales, and provides day-to-day upkeep of the retail space.

Gallery owner/managers experience the same challenges within the art market that artists do. Owner/managers have to figure how to attract customers, offer desirable art work, and sell their products to a fickle tourist consumer base. Usually owner/managers fill their galleries with artwork from numerous artists. This places the owners/managers in a different position in relation to the production of the art product than the artists. They allot their labor and time among tasks within the business that have more to do with product selection, product promotion, the sales experience, and sales

follow-ups. Non-art producing owners/managers rely on a sizable network of other art producers' labor and creativity, manifesting what Becker refers to as the collectivity of action making up art worlds and producing art works (Becker 1982). This arrangement forces gallery owners/managers to constantly check inventory, and make requests for items, subjects, and/or styles that are depleted. Such requests are not so easily filled as many artists work under their own motivation. Unless the artists have prints of whatever images, subjects, or styles are needed, they may not be able to supply what the owner/manager requests.

In every gallery business I encountered, there is a sense of serendipity that precedes the unveiling of new work. Thus, non-artist owners/managers deal with a significant lack of knowledge of and even surprise from the images entering their gallery. Sometimes such anticipation of the unveiling of a painting can be used to market the painting and attract customers to a gallery, but this sales tactic can only be successful if the artist is widely recognized. In most cases, managers are able to decline images that they believe will not sell to their customer base. Indeed, Joanna mentioned how often she turns artists away because their paintings do not fall within the type of work her gallery offers.

On selecting artists for the gallery, Joanna described what she looks for:

We want mountain art, things that people come here to see, the streams, the mountains. All the things that sightseers come to see and want to take home with them...Most of our [paintings] are landscapes...That's what most people request (Interview JH).

Joanna no longer actively recruits artists to exhibit their work in her gallery. She claims that painters come unannounced to the gallery so often that she makes her selections from

their presentations. Most of the artists exhibited in Joanna's gallery originate from the local area and still live locally. Some of the artists have formal degrees or graphic arts experience while others are self-taught artists.

Joanna's experience in the retail aspect of the gallery has led to her familiarity with consumer tastes and purchasing patterns. According to Joanna, gallery visitors prioritize color over subject matter when considering the purchase of a painting. As was confirmed to me by other artists and gallery owners, as well as some art patrons, bright, vivid colors were found to be more appealing and more attractive than subtle hues. Additionally, many art patrons consider their home decor when considering a painting for purchase. Joanna also observed that most gallery visitors buy paintings that connect personally to their identity or experience. Sometimes knowledge about the painter facilitates that personal connection to the painting. Oftentimes, gallery visitors want to know about a particular painter, and merrily accept opportunities to meet and mingle with gallery artists. Joanna exclaims, "When one of our artists comes into the gallery and someone's buying their painting, the people are ecstatic. I have seen an artist come in when nothing is selling. All of the sudden their stuff is selling because everybody meets them and they want something from that person so they can go back home and say 'I met the artist'" (Interview JH).

Though ten painters have representation, the majority of Joanna's gallery space exhibit work from three painters. These three painters, Joanna's business partner and gallery co-owner, Shawn Newcomb, and a female artist paints images depicting mountain landscapes, wildlife, trees, scenes from the national park, interior cabin scenes,

rural farm life, and patriotic scenes. The gallery's exterior facade resembles a pioneer cabin, thus reflecting the images it sells.

The gallery is situated in a narrow hollow adjacent to the main road looping through the arts and crafts community about four miles from downtown Mountainville. This location makes the business very accessible and very noticeable to the passing car traffic. Indeed, the gallery paintings are easily seen from the road through the large windows at the front of the building. Joanna and her business partner also exhibit paintings outside the front door near the parking lot to attract passersby.

Joanna emphasized the friendly atmosphere the gallery projects, and recounted gallery visitors who exclaimed how integral visiting the gallery is to their Mountainville stay. During our interview, I witnessed Joanna's welcoming interaction with visitors. A couple celebrating their seventh anniversary visited the gallery, and Joanna offered them a 10 percent discount. Although such a discount is not a significant sacrifice on Joanna's part, the gesture embodies gifting. This kind of personal encounter, whether or not the couple accepted the offer, shapes the tourist experience and makes it more than pleasant. They feel special.

Joanna taught me that galleries are contested grounds of art as a personally aesthetic experience and art as a commodity. Learning how Joanna and her business partner turn away artists, who offer their paintings for sale, solidified the understanding that gallery owners/managers construct the style, subject, and genre of paintings available in the market. They select commodities that conform to their retail criteria. Yet, among the art commodities for sale in the gallery, owners/managers construct knowledge,

experiences, and intimacy between the art work and a visitor so that the visitor will purchase and possess the painting.

Susan Huskey

Susan's gallery is located about twenty-five miles outside of Mountainville's city limits in Rocky River, a much smaller and less commercially busy village than Mountainville. Rocky River is also adjacent to the national park and is the closest commercial district to the most visited section of the national park. Some Mountainville tourists day-trip to Rocky River in order to experience what the village has called its "peaceful side" of the mountains (Fieldnotes). Indeed, tourism is Rocky River's main source of economic revenue and supports several family-owned motels, restaurants, and gift-shops. Susan's gallery offers the opportunity to explore the use of cultural icons in art sold beyond the economic density of Mountainville's tourism industry, presenting an indication of the validity of this project's claim that cultural icons are used to promote the Appalachian region as a distinctly different cultural entity.

Susan's gallery offers a few mass-produced items for sale like film stills from classic television shows and jewelry and key chain trinkets. The focus in the gallery is on craft and art products, especially on the paintings and prints of Lyell Richardson, a very popular and frequently collected artist who for the last two years exclusively sells his work through Susan and her husband. Because Lyell is not located within Mountainville's marketed city limits, marketing of his art is not sponsored by Mountainville's Department of Tourism nor by Mountainville's Chamber of Commerce like many of the other artists participating in this project. Thus, Lyell is not directly integrated into the dynamics of the art industry of Mountainville. Notwithstanding, Lyell

is at least the second most collected artist in the area (based on volume of sales estimated by Susan to be \$600,000) and has been dubbed the national park's artist laureate. Lyell retired from sales and gallery management and then sold his business to Susan and her husband so that Lyell could focus on painting. The content of Lyell's artwork provides important data that help to understanding patterns of symbols and meanings in Appalachian tourist art. Susan helped me further understand the marketing of Lyell's artwork.

Originally from coastal North Carolina, Susan, her husband, and their two young children moved to Rocky River from Florida twenty years ago. Susan explained that her husband flew over Rocky River on a business trip and liked the look of the geography. Convinced the village was ideal for raising a family, they soon relocated and Susan worked on opening her crafts and arts shop. Susan had been a bookkeeper and knew the accounting principles necessary for running a business, but finding local crafters and artists to fill her store's inventory was a bit more taxing. She attended craft festivals and art shows in addition to seeking out specific artists to find the kinds of products she wanted in her gallery. Susan limits her gallery's art inventory to three to four artists mainly because she does not want to be perceived exclusively as an art gallery. Offering a variety of products is a guiding business practice for Susan and her husband. Susan reported to me that the gallery's busiest month is October, because the autumn leaves in the national park attract many tourists. This is followed by busy months of summer (June, July, and August) with the winter months and September being the slowest months. I met with Susan in September and there was a steady stream of visitors to her gallery-

indicating how relative one's perception of slow business may be. Susan also reported that Lyell Richardson's art alone draws 50,000 people yearly to the gallery.

When considering what art and crafts to carry in the gallery, Susan selects artists and craftspeople who meet four criteria. First, the products must be locally handmade. Most of the artists and craftspeople exhibited in Susan's gallery are within a fifty mile radius of Mountainville and all are from within the Appalachian region. Secondly, the art pieces have to be affordably priced. Lyell Richardson's paintings sell as prints in Susan's gallery and are priced between \$65.00 and almost \$800.00. Wall calendars containing Lyell's work sell for \$20.00. Thus, most gallery visitors can purchase some art piece that fits within their budget. Thirdly, art products must exhibit quality of technical skills, especially towards creating a realistic image. The artists and craftspeople exhibited in Susan's gallery display advanced abilities and command over their medium, although such quality of skill is not formally measured and may be quite subjective.

Lastly, Susan selects artists and craftspeople whose products contain a certain body of imagery. Artwork pertaining to sites in the national park sells particularly well in Susan's gallery. Susan suggests that art works take on the role of souvenir and that gallery visitors look for a "piece of their vacation to take home and put on the wall" (Interview SH). Pioneer cabins and cantilever barns are believed to be unique to the area, and have become popular images for a lot of gallery visitors, as are images of mountains (Fieldnotes). Susan observed that Floridians generally favor winter snow scenes while spring scenes are more preferred by Tennessee and North Carolina residents. Because of such preferences, Susan understands that in order to accommodate her customers' tastes she needs to have a variety of images.

Susan also needs to attract people to her gallery. She believes most people who visit Mountainville do not know the village of Rocky River exists. Rocky River might go unnoticed by Mountainville tourists because of the disparate budgets each town devotes to advertising. Susan lamented to me that the local Chamber of Commerce does not advertise Rocky River like it used to. The amount of attractions, shops, hotels, and restaurants Mountainville's department of tourism advertises is grossly overwhelming compared to the handful of businesses in Rocky River who promote themselves.

Susan tries to highlight her business's significance as a gallery of local arts and crafts and as the only gallery exhibiting and selling Lyell Richardson's paintings and prints. She has attracted visitors through gallery brochures, some television and magazine coverage, and word of mouth. Susan has yet to develop an internet site for her gallery.

Once visitors step into the gallery, Susan hopes they experience a family-centered retail setting. She and her husband have tried to create a shopping experience that accommodates as many ages and interests as possible, although nostalgia is an apparent overarching theme (Fieldnotes). In addition to art works that contain icons of living rurally and in the past, the gallery offers nostalgic toys, film memorabilia, and pottery. Such diversification aims to make the visitor linger and to ensure the visitor finds something he/she likes enough to purchase.

In addition to diverse product line, Susan also offers information about the gallery's featured artists. Posted near their collection of paintings and prints, biographical sketches and artistic statements from each artist are on display. For the gallery's most popular artist, Lyell Richardson, a closed-circuit video explaining how he creates his art is on constant view. Such information made available to gallery visitors helps to

personalize each artist and may facilitate a personal connection from the tourist to the artist giving cause for the tourist to purchase the artist's work.

Given the inherent risks involved in any small business, Susan sees knowing her customer base as a key factor in her gallery's success. Susan's personality is easy going and cheerful, and she uses her friendliness to not only provide a positive experience to her gallery visitors, but to also get to know her customers personally. Susan is convinced that a friendly exchange and attentive interaction "keeps [customers] coming back" (Interview SH). Moreover, Susan sees herself as being of service to visitors' requests or needs for information about local attractions. Providing such information, Susan believes, contributes to the visitors' positive and friendly experience in her gallery.

In addition to the annual 14,000 brochures highlighting gallery art, Susan also sends thank you notes to customers who have recently purchased a painting or print. Such communication is consistent with Susan's belief that successful business benefits from personal, friendly interaction. Susan reported that she even receives gifts, like home-grown fruit or home-raised honey, from out-of-state customers- evidence that her personal and friendly demeanor develops rapport that affects her business success.

Although Susan did not provide reliable data, she perceives that 87 percent of her customers are repeat business and 84 percent of gallery visitors are out-of-town tourists. The point is that Susan largely depends on external monies from visitors who find her gallery interesting enough to revisit. I suggest her gallery's subtle nostalgic tones connect to the travel goals of tourists to Rocky River. Susan believes that "people come to [Rocky River] because they are interested in pioneer lifestyle as well as wildlife. They think local residents are very fortunate to be so close to the national park" (Interview SH).

According to Susan, visitors believe this area is unique because it is peaceful, and it allows a step back in time and an experience with a perceivably different cultural way of life from that found in more urban/suburban areas, and especially areas beyond Appalachia. Susan's own perspective towards Appalachian culture associates it with a mountainous, country-living, with a pioneer lifestyle, and with personal characteristics of self-sufficiency, of a deeper interest in conversation, and of an enriched life.

Susan's story echoes Joanna's in that gallery owners/managers directly influence the kinds of commodities available for sale in the tourist market based on their retail criteria. Susan differs from Joanna in that the experience of the visitor and intimacy between the commodity and the consumer are much more forged through the gallery worker's (in this case Susan) demeanor and presentation style. Joanna certainly creates a friendly and positive experience for her gallery visitors, but Susan sees her friendliness as a tactic for repeat business. Susan's focus on friendliness with and service to the gallery visitor connects to this research's exploration of performance within the gallery space.

Clay Gideon

I met Clay for an interview on a Thursday afternoon in early November at his father's gallery. Clay is in his mid-forties and is quite dedicated to his career as business manager of his father's art. His father, Joseph Gideon, is a highly respected painter and sculptor in Mountainville. Joseph Gideon moved his family to Mountainville in 1966 to pursue painting full time after having worked as a partner in his own ad agency. Joseph chose to settle in Mountainville because of two reasons: the artistic inspiration he drew from the natural beauty of the area and the volume of people willing to purchase his work while vacating in Mountainville. At the time, there were no other galleries in

Mountainville and very little art competition to his paintings. Several Mountainville painters have taken lessons or insight from Joseph, and many more consider him to be a grandfather of the Mountainville art community.

Clay, however, does not have the artistic aptitude or desire that characterizes Joseph. Rather, Clay possesses a keen business sense passed on to him by his mother and supplemented it with college courses taken whenever he needed to learn a particular business skill. Clay is currently the President of Greystone, Inc, the publishing and marketing company of Joseph Gideon art, employs twelve people, and produces stock for four art galleries. All galleries are located within a fifty mile radius, and three of these galleries are located along the main tourist path to and through Mountainville. Inventory in each of these galleries is limited to paintings produced by Joseph. He paints watercolors, oils, and acrylics in subjects that range from mountain scenes, to florals, to European scenes, to marine-scapes, and to a few portraits. Joseph has also produced a handful of bronze sculptures of the human figure. The gallery inventories are rounded out with a few selections from local potters and jewelry makers.

The emphasis of each gallery is on the sale of prints of Joseph's paintings, as originals sell for \$20,000 and more. There are two categories of prints, open and limited edition prints. Images produced as open edition prints will be manufactured as long as the demand for them exists. The print quality is not very high in that there is a noticeable difference between the print and the original work. Plus, open edition prints are usually produced on poor quality paper, and each print is not numbered. Limited edition prints, produced from the lithograph process, are printed on higher quality materials with near perfect image quality when compared to the original painting. Limited edition prints are

produced in a set of a defined number with each individual print numbered. Clay described how Greystone initially published 500 limited edition prints of a Joseph Gideon painting. Demand for Joseph's prints was high enough that the family decided to raise the lot number to 1,000 prints. Now, Joseph Gideon paintings are produced in batches of 1,500 limited edition prints. Prints make art more affordable for the patron, but prints also allow the artist time to produce paintings of higher value. Of course, this condition is especially true if the artist employs staff to market and distribute his prints. Shawn Newcomb (featured above) seems to have lost some of his time to produce new paintings because of the demands that maintaining and marketing his print inventory make on his schedule.

Advances in print technology have led to big changes in the art market structure, according to Clay. Giclee printing is the newest technology of image reproduction. This process reproduces a painting onto canvas or watercolor paper. The print is produced one at a time as it is ordered. This technique eliminates the need for storage costs and up-front investment from the gallery to the publisher. Moreover, it allows for the versatility of sizes of prints and can even yield prints larger than the original painting. This printing process has also affected the price of prints. Normally, Clay offers an introductory rate for new limited edition prints. Introductory rates have traditionally been cheaper with lithograph prints because of the need to move the product which has been produced in a large set quantity. With giclee printing there is no need for an introductory rate because there is no large set quantity to move. Hence, the gallery can get full price for a print whether it is new or not.

Clay thinks of his role as president of Greystone as building an industry around an artist's work. As a publisher and a marketer, Clay draws on several marketing strategies to solicit sales. The use of limited edition prints made from one original is a common strategy found in many Mountainville art galleries. Limited edition prints present the opportunity for artists to create a demand for their work. Market demand concentrated on an original painting increases the value of the original, because it is one of a kind. With limited edition prints this same demand may be distributed among 500 or 1,500 numbered goods without compromising the market value of the art image. Moreover, the price for the original painting increases dramatically, as in the case of Joseph's original paintings which Clay cited as having skyrocketed in price if published into prints. Indeed, the exposure an image may receive by being displayed on the walls of 1,000 homes actually acts as advertisement for the artist; thereby, making his/her art recognizable, popular, and sought out.

Building on the principle of limiting the number of goods available, Clay detailed how the concept of a collection is a key to success in an art business. Clay and his staff exert a significant amount of effort to get gallery patrons started on a collection of Joseph's paintings. Insinuating a sense of urgency or missing out on an opportunity serve to shape the psyche of a collector. Assigning a specific number of a print within a limited edition to a print collector helps to garner repeat sales. Some patrons associate symbolic significance to a number, like an anniversary date or birth date.

Promoting print sales and collections are meaningless if the artist does not offer subjects and styles that match the tastes of the gallery visitors. Clay acknowledges that artists must be open to paint and promote a range of subjects. Clay describes his father as

being as diverse as three to four artists in terms of style and subjects. Although Joseph enjoys painting a variety of subjects, Greystone, Inc does not print all of his paintings. They print what they think will sell in the gallery. This inventory includes a plethora of mountain scenes, rivers, rural farmsteads, trees, and churches. Clay and his staff, however, are often surprised at how many beach and European scenes sell. Clay believes that people who visit Mountainville also go the beach and to Europe. If those tourists did not find a painting in those locations that they liked, then they might find and purchase a painting they like of those locations in a Joseph Gideon Gallery. Clay further surmises that gallery visitors are not looking just for a souvenir but for a painting “that recalls where they’ve been...[and that] brings joy” or for something that captures the positive experiences they have had (Interview CG).

Clay is also aware that such positive experiences can be had during a gallery visit and directly impacts the sale of a painting or print. Additionally, Clay believes it imperative to build rapport with gallery visitors and figure out their artistic tastes. Clay echoes Susan Huskey’s convictions that friendly and attentive interactions with gallery visitors turn them into repeat customers. Thus, an artist must be social and interact with patrons. In one sense, this kind of interaction between artists and gallery visitor helps to celebritize the artist⁷. Furthermore, such interaction also manufactures a sense of sacredness of the art object while at the same time personalizes the art object for the viewer. Therefore, emphasis is placed in Joseph Gideon Galleries on forming customer relationships through the customer’s experience with the gallery, the workers, and the art. According to Clay, cultivating the customer base is fundamental to a thriving art

⁷The theme of celebritizing or mystification of the artist is expanded in Chapter Eight.

business. Clay states, “We know art doesn’t have to be bought, so we have to make it a pleasant experience” (Interview CG). Service becomes an important part of the experience with the art. Clay is quick to make a contrast between the service one may expect at a large discount store where the products are cheap and the assistance is minimal and the service one may expect in a Joseph Gideon gallery where the art products are more expensive but the service and a positive art experience are not sacrificed. Moreover, Joseph and Clay both see the purchase of a painting or a print as an exchange between customer and artist of waged work for art work. This exchange of wages for art is a compliment to the artist from the patron, and such a compliment, from Joseph’s and Clay’s perspective, deserves the same kind of sincere affinity expressed through the friendly, personable service provided by the gallery staff.

In addition to producing a viable product via print, desirable imagery, and positive, personal exchange, Clay is very open to try new business strategies. He even mentioned how often he thinks about new schemes to increase sales. The location of a gallery is very effective for sales. The Gideons have acquired gallery locations that are very visible to foot and car traffic. Such locations act as billboards for Joseph’s paintings. Clay also listed several typical marketing strategies including commercial time on cable television and radio channels, offering gift certificates to solicit sales on already stocked items, and direct mailing of brochures to a mailing list of 22,000 addresses two times a year. Brochures have been a traditional marketing tool for Joseph Gideon Galleries. Joseph realized early in his business that a stand-alone gallery is not as intriguing as a group of galleries or studios. To make his gallery more enticing to tourists in the 1970s, he grouped together about five artists and craftspeople and developed a brochure tour of

the arts and crafts community. This was the initial start to what is now an eight mile loop of over one hundred artists, craftspeople, and restaurateurs that attract thousands of people each year. Initially brochures were placed at hotels and restaurants in Mountainville. Now, however, there are so many brochures available that there is too much visual competition in the brochure racks. Hence, Clay utilizes direct advertising by mailing brochures to gallery visitors. Each of these market strategies plus the willingness to try new strategies has helped the Gideons minimize risk over forty years.

Their tenure in Mountainville's tourism industry affords Clay and his father a valuable perspective towards the directions the tourism market has followed. Of all the gallery owners/managers and artists I interviewed, Clay spoke the most with me about the tourism industry in Mountainville. Clay recognizes that the volume of the tourism industry in Mountainville has grown rapidly since the 1960s. He says, "there are so many restaurants and so many beds that need to be filled, so we can't cater to fewer people with more money. Mountainville has to attract large numbers of people. The monster has to be fed" (Interview CG). Clay also recognizes that "upper-end people don't want to stand shoulder to shoulder with fifty thousand other upper-end people" (Interview CG). Many business owners described this occurrence to me and how noticeably absent higher spenders had become in Mountainville, yet many more tourists from working class positions had selected the town for their vacations. Mountainville markets itself to a wide customer-base and then needs products and attractions that appeal to wide customer interests. For example, art galleries have to offer a range of affordable items if they want to maximize sales. A quandary then emerges that situates Mountainville in an economy that attracts more and more customers with less and less money to spend. Because of the

affordability that the print technology makes for art work coupled with a huge loyal customer base, Clay reported that his gallery had not experienced any decline in sales even though the money spent per capita of Mountainville tourist has declined.

Clay believes that Mountainville's marketing should be about offering enrichment and enjoyment to the tourist's experience, not about attracting volumes of people. Clay wishes that Mountainville "could seek itself to be unique,...and that lease owners [of the properties downtown] were less focused on income and more [focused] on quality of business. The most lease dollars is not as important as the most interesting businesses." He feels that due to the lack of interesting businesses and attractions that "people seek something that's not downtown," which may also explain the success that the Joseph Gideon Gallery located in the arts and crafts community outside of the downtown area has experienced. Clay goes on to lament that "I don't know if it's necessary to put flagstone and logs on every building," referring to the repetitive use of architectural elements signifying Appalachian cultural themes (Interview CG).

Clay's reference to Appalachian architectural features permitted me to ask about his perceptions of Appalachian culture. When asked how he might describe Appalachia, Clay talked about an economy essentially based on mining and hard labor. He commented on the poverty of the region. He talked about the character of the people from Appalachia as humble, not arrogant, and self-effacing. Clay also remarked how tourists visiting Mountainville expect to experience hillbillies, but that expectation goes unfulfilled. Elaborating, Clay explained how an Appalachian identity does not inform Mountainville's tourism industry. Even though Mountainville is in the geographical middle of Appalachia, the spirit of Appalachia, as Clay perceives it, does not reside

within the corporate limits of Mountainville. Although he recognizes that many paintings in Mountainville depict Appalachian icons, Clay asserts that artists do not have to paint cultural stereotypes. Indeed, Clay argues that “places that play on stereotypes don’t honor it, they degrade it” (Interview CG). Clay’s marketing of Joseph Gideon’s art portrays Joseph as a national artist who happens to reside in Mountainville. There is no promotion of Joseph as an Appalachian artist.

My interview with Clay Gideon helped me to see emerging patterns within the Mountainville art market. First of all, Clay Gideon, Joseph Gideon Galleries, and Greystone, Inc. present an example of a mature business that has figured out through trial and error how to be enormously successful. This business developed a brand product within a small art market economy and over forty years has amassed a large repeat customer and collector base as well as a reputation of quality. Patterns of overcoming economic risk became apparent as Clay detailed the brainstorming, the calculating, and the implementation of new strategies to enhance business, especially strategies affecting the structural production of the art product (prints, collections, marketing staff, etc.) and the emphasis on knowing the customer. Joseph’s early experience as a Mountainville artist underscores the importance of being the first to take advantage of new business strategies and technology to garner a niche in the market. Although overcoming risks are a real concern, many of the other artists I interviewed did not have the market longevity to provide such a tenured nor successful rebuttal to market risks. Risks like frugal and finicky tourist tastes and high levels of competition threaten income and market position for all the artists in Mountainville.

Another pattern emerging from Clay's story is the attention that most of the artists pay to the health of Mountainville's tourism industry. Because most permanent residents make their living from tourism, keeping a watchful eye on other tourism businesses in Mountainville becomes an important way to stay ahead or keep up with the competition. Moreover, scouting other businesses provides a context for one's own tourism business. Depending on what preferences one has towards Mountainville's changing tourism industry, understanding one's place within the tourism industry enables one to respond to the direction that the industry is moving towards. For example, business people who value the cultural aspects of Mountainville's tourist attractions, like art and craft galleries, oppose the businesses that are more profit driven, like T-shirts shops. Most every person in Mountainville I spoke with has an opinion about the direction, the growth, and the state of the local tourism industry. These opinions are expressed as often as opinions about the weather. Clay exemplified this as he shared his understanding and beliefs about the local economy during our interview. Furthermore, Clay, because his family's business has enabled him to, acts on his commitment to assisting the local community by contributing financially and time-wise to various community organizations. He, like many other Mountainvillians, recognizes his interconnections to local people and the affects such connections have on Mountainville's tourist product.

These stories contribute to the complexity and variation in artists' and gallery managers' lives. Having recounted their motivations, their difficulties, and their solutions to supplying and to selling art products in the tourist market, this research turns to an exploration of the images produced and consumed. In the proceeding chapter, questions about the kinds and frequencies of images that make up the inventory of Mountainville's

art market are raised. Moreover, data derived from gallery customer surveys is presented in order to explore the consumer demand for art merchandise and the connections such demand has with Appalachian cultural representations.

CHAPTER FIVE

APPLYING THE PAINT: ART IMAGES AS ICONS

This chapter begins with a presentation of research conducted in North America and Appalachia that examines the complexity of social categories. This review of literature is schematic and brief only to highlight the postmodernist efforts to deconstruct stereotypes and to acknowledge the heterogeneity of and within social categories and place, especially what it means to be “Appalachian.” Such expanding of categories of identity and such recognition of a variety of meanings associated with cultural icons as they are ritually consumed in tourist arts sets the stage for the authentication of seemingly inauthentic meanings. This chapter then presents the results of the content analysis of gallery paintings and describes a sampling of the images for sale in Mountainville art galleries, the perceptions of Appalachian stereotypes held by artists and tourists, and the iconography that artists expect to represent Appalachia. This chapter ends with a discussion of demographic data of gallery visitors participating in this project, the kind of images they purchased, and the reasons they gave for purchasing paintings.

The Anthropology of North America/ Appalachian Studies

This project builds on just one but important aspect of the anthropology of North America: the deconstruction of social categories, primarily “Appalachian.” Within the North American literature, issues of diversity among class, race, gender, and how they intersect are most prominent. Heterogeneity is a key characteristic of the United States and can be seen by examining the multiple levels and expanded definitions of class, race, and gender (Susser and Patterson 2001). Many anthropologists studying the U.S. have examined the social constructedness of these entities to reveal the “subjectivity of social facts,” the power and force for behavior the social facts carry, and the changing character

of these social facts. For example, racialization, categorizing people into separate groups based on perceived biological differences, has been described as a function of social stratification that emerged out of 18th century preoccupation for science (Smedley 1998). Challenging the belief that racial categories are rooted in nature, many scholars have shown how the category boundaries of race have changed throughout U.S. history in correlation to immigrant patterns (Jacobson 1998; Goode and Schneider 1994; Gregory and Sanjek 1994).

Providing evidence that race is an arbitrary social category as well as an ineffective way to categorize humans has been an extraordinary contribution of the anthropology of North America. From this sub-discipline, studies deconstructing the category of race have also portrayed the lived experience of the effects and persistence of racial discrimination (Harrison 1995, 1998; Gregory and Sanjek 1994). The connection between the literature on race and Appalachian tourist arts is the common lens of understanding how cultural structures inform personal identities of individuals. Racial categories, white and non-white, do play a powerful force in identity formation and lived experience within American society (Brodkin 1998; Gregory 1998; Hartigan 1999; Roediger 1991; Sanjek 1998; Stack 1996).

Racial categories do not act on identity or shape behavior alone. Class positions and gender roles and identities affect the ways people perceive themselves and others. Studies on the conflation of racial identity and class position illustrate the multiple social markers, including gender, that shape the opportunities various groups may be afforded (Brodkin 1998) and the discrimination they encounter (Hartigan 1999). For example, an individual's racial whiteness may act as a means to resources. According to Roediger in

his examination of the relationship between race and class, “status and privileges conferred by race could be used to make up for alienating and exploitative class relationships” (Roediger 1991:13). In other words, individuals categorized as poor whites receive more benefits or advantages, because of their whiteness and despite their lack of economic resources, than poor, non-white individuals.

Studies of gender and the work place give insight into the contested grounds of personal identity and engendered social identity to illustrate how gender norms become challenged (Weston 1990) and how gender position becomes a site of subversive power dynamics (Anglin 2002a; 2002b). For example, Kath Weston’s ethnographic account of women entering skilled blue-collar jobs gives examples of the ideological challenges women encounter with gendered notions of work. For women trying to gain access to and then keep jobs traditionally held by men, tactics used to counter male metaphors of production capacity include wearing clothing in ways that convey physical strength and emphasizing concrete labor accomplishments. Although some women in Weston’s study felt they had to present symbols of maleness in their labor, challenges to depictions of labor power as metaphorically male were effectively carried out (Weston 1990). Two current themes in this literature on the anthropology of North America are the confronting and reformation of race, class, and gender as socially constructed categories and the impact of such categories on one’s own identity and on the way one categorizes others (Susser1996).

Ideas about place and cultural boundaries have been deconstructed in similar fashion to the deconstruction of race, class, and gender (Appadurai 1990, 2000; Harvey 1996; Goode 2001). Boundaries between places and between cultural groups are

arbitrary. Appadurai (1990) suggests that notions of culture as bounded, separate, and structural be replaced by notions of culture as flowing, in process, and overlapping. Especially as cultural pasts are put on display in, according to Appadurai, museums and collections and, according to this project, in galleries and storefronts, “culture becomes...more an arena for conscious choice, justification and representation” for consuming audiences forming and expressing identity (Appadurai 1990:18). The possibility for choice reflects the fluctuating social imaginations that Benedict Anderson points out in his work on the rise of state nationalism to organize imagined communities (Anderson 1983). Appadurai’s understanding of culture sanctions the notion that there are no tangible or conceptual cultural boundaries in the U.S. enabling cultural goods or traditions to neatly fit into one cultural realm or one particular place.

Appalachia is just one of many examples of a U.S region that has no cultural boundary or objective distinction. Indeed, no region exists as a given. All are constructs. Yet, political and economic factors relating to Appalachia’s natural and cultural resource control have attempted to bind, homogenize, and make distinct the region. Such perceived cultural distinctions have been promoted in pop-culture media, while consumerism and the desire to express one’s cultural capital (Holt 1998) cultivate the possession of cultural artifacts that carry cultural distinction. In the vein of Benedict Anderson’s imagined communities and the Frankfurt School’s mechanically produced images, social imagination acts to categorize populations and regions into cultural entities that may not be authentically representative. Regionalism and nationalism compel social members to accept the ways groups are imagined and constructed. People organize their

sense of others based on these dominating imagined constructions, unaware of how oppressive constructions may be of the groups they purport to represent.

This project, following the literature from the anthropology of North America, will unfold the social constructions of images of Appalachia as poor, patriarchal, and white in order to generate a complicated and integrated account of racial, class, and gender identity and experience. Appalachian Studies is part of a broader body of literature of the anthropology of North America and shares with this discourse the effort to deconstruct notions of culture and identity that may seem static and natural.

Scholarly writing about the Appalachian region emerged as a formal discipline in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Since then, scholars from a variety of disciplines have examined the political, economic, and social structures that affect poverty and environmental degradation, as well as the resistance to hegemonic power and the community building in the region. Perhaps the most effort exerted by Appalachian scholars has been to challenge representations of Appalachia that mask the sources of regional problems and that neglect the complexity of lived Appalachian experiences (Billings and Blee 2000; Billings, Norman, and Ledford 1999; Hsiung 1997; Inscoc 2001; Lewis 1998; McNeil 1995; Pudup, Billings, and Waller 1995; Shapiro 1978; Turner and Cabbell 1985; Wagner, Batley, Jackson, O'Brien, Throckmorton 1986; Waller 1988, 1995; Williamson 1995). Appalachia has been described by literature and media (including novels, TV, and film) as a homogenous area in which everyone is white, living in rural poverty with poor access to jobs and education, and is clinging to "traditional" ways (Campbell 1921; Caudill 1963; Fox 1901; Kephart 1913; Weller 1965). This

representation has and continues to reach popular culture audiences, thereby making it a persistent stereotype associated with Appalachia.

A class exercise I conducted at the beginning of a summer survey course of Appalachian culture and folklore at a mid-Atlantic state university led to the naming of associations that the university students made with Appalachian culture. Poverty, isolation, and traditionalism as well as moonshine, log cabins, and outhouses describe the values and material culture of Appalachian culture as the students had learned to perceive it from the media and through folklore. These images and characteristics hardly define the real culture of Appalachia, but they do suggest some of the basic assumptions that many Americans have made of a region within their own country.

Historians and social scientists have described how the perception of Appalachia as “a coherent region inhabited by a homogeneous population possessing a uniform culture” was an inaccurate image produced by intellectuals, writers, social science experts, and political agencies (Shapiro 1978:ix; Batteau 1990; Raitz and Ulack 1991). Additionally, post-modernist exercises have asserted that Appalachia is a complicated, interwoven reality and should not be understood as uniform or homogenous. Many of these scholars have emphasized the diversity within Appalachia, particularly relations and experiences among racialized ethnicities (Anglin 2004; Griffin 2004; Hartigan 2004; Inscoe 2001; Inscoe 2004; Lewis 1987; Smith 2004; Trotter 1990; Turner and Cable 1985), genders (Anglin 2000; Becker 1998; Hill 1997; Maggard 1994; Smith 1998; Tice 1998), classes (Billings and Blee 2000; Hartigan 1999; Hsiung 1997; Lewis 1998), religions (Jones 1999; McCauley 1995), education backgrounds, and life histories (Eller 1999:x; Billings 1999:6).

The images of Appalachia as a backwards region blame people from Appalachia and their culture for the region's social, economic, and environmental problems. With the cause of Appalachia's problems attributed to personal and cultural characteristics, Appalachian scholars have established that such images minimize and even ignore the complicated economic and political structures which are really the source of the region's conditions (Anglin 2002a; Batteau 1983; 1990; Billings 1999:11; Billings and Blee 2000; Billings, Norman and Ledford 1999; Eller 1999:x; Fisher 1993; Gaventa 1980; Hsiung 1997; Lewis and Billings 1997; Pudup, Billings, and Waller 1995; Raitz and Ulack 1984; Shapiro 1978; Tice 1998; Waller 1988; Whisnant 1983; 1994). Thus, values of individualism and fatalism are assumed and even assigned to an Appalachian identity by outsiders, policy makers and even social scientists among others, to be embodied by everyone in this region; otherwise the region would have supposedly accepted opportunities to embrace progress and pull itself up by its bootstraps.

There are, of course, other lingering stereotypes misrepresenting the Southern mountain region. Kinship ties, though an essential form of social relations, are not as structurally secure as stereotypes suggest (i.e. the stereotypes of feuding between two or more extensive family networks and the stereotypes of cousin marriages). This region like the rest of American society has experienced changes within family networks, especially through divorce and job relocation (Berry 2000; Couto 1994; Fitchen 1981; Tickamyer and Tickamyer 1987). The affinity for and deep connection to nature associated with people living in Appalachia is another myth, despite the number of state and national parks promoting the region's natural habitats. Like most Americans, people working in Appalachia usually hold waged labor jobs, relying on farming or gardening

the land as a supplement to their livelihoods (Halperin 1990). Hunting and four-wheeling are popular sports, but these are activities found throughout the United States and are not distinctly Appalachian recreation. Indeed, many Mountainville residents I met worked in service related jobs and did not farm or garden, plus they rarely visited the nearby national park. Challenges to these and other assumptions about the region of Appalachia and their perpetuation have been made on a more public level during the last three decades because the stereotypes often contradicted local history and individual experience (Eller 1999:xi).

Two recent volumes, Confronting Appalachian Stereotypes: Back Talk from an American Region and Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century, provide the most direct discussion among many useful articles and books about the cultural distinctiveness of Appalachia. Composed of essays from scholars of many disciplines, these volumes seek to form a much more complicated view of Appalachian culture. They move away from anthropology's and other social science disciplines' use of classic ethnographic approaches which typically define and delineate cultures in essentialized ways. The contributors to Confronting Appalachian Stereotypes not only make "challenges to regional stereotypes...[they also] provide insight into the operations of cultural power and ideology in America that such stereotyping signifies" (Billings 1999:3). Appalachia in the Making, is an edited collection of essays that deconstruct myths of Appalachia to show that social patterns associated with the region, like feuding, poverty, and economic hardship, are not unique to Appalachia. Indeed, the contributors show that Appalachia shares a history of economic, political, and social patterns with other parts of the United States.

Given the efforts these two volumes exert to challenge stereotypes, in addition to a special issue of the Journal of Appalachian Studies (2004) which featured articles on the complexity of racialization and whiteness in Appalachian cultural identities, I suggest that no cultural pattern is distinctly Appalachia. No collective of social patterns congruently define a culture of Appalachia. Consequently, the variation of geography, the unevenness of economic development, and the diversity of population, among other proofs of heterogeneity, point to the impossibility of a defined culture of Appalachia. Considering the literature from Appalachian Studies that explores the intellectual history of “Appalachia,” I concur that “Appalachia” is a social category constructed by false assumptions and generalizations and assigned to a particular place and population through public media formats.

Despite continued efforts to deconstruct Appalachian stereotypes, this project with Appalachian art consumers demonstrates that these stereotypes as part of a social category are important symbols that have meanings in reference to one’s identity and livelihood. Scholars within Appalachian studies acknowledge that the early, traditional discourse of Appalachia “create[d] the very reality it purports to describe” (Billings 1999:12). This reality, though invented (Shapiro 1978; Batteau 1990), contributes in some form to the identities of people from Appalachia. On one hand, identities may be formed in relation to cultural stereotypes, while other identities may be formed in opposition to stereotypes. The traditional discourse of Appalachian culture is documented by this dissertation project in the identities described to me by Mountainville artists and tourists. This discourse generates stereotypes which penetrate into the lived experiences and the personal identities of people in and out of Appalachia.

This connection to identity and experiences does not delegitimize the value of Appalachia cultural stereotypes, but rather pivots the lens of authenticity to bring into the focus the persuasiveness and consumability of icons as a means to express individualism. If I am to take heed of the “task of reconceiving the region in terms of cultural as well as racial/ethnic pluralities” (Anglin 2004: 78), then I must acknowledge the factoring of stereotypic icons into the formation and expression of personal identity and experience. For example, the act of painting scenes of pristine mountainscapes is not only an expression of the artist’s affinity for his/her home, but also ensures that his/her painting will be purchased by tourists who revere the mountains and use them as symbols to express their personal experience.

Following the lead of Billings, Norman, and Ledford (1999), this study of the Mountainville art market investigates the direct connection between stereotypical imagery and power and ideology at play in American culture. Although this project challenges the authenticity of the representational quality of icons used in paintings, it also demonstrates that stereotypes do hold some degree of authenticity correlating to individuals’ experiences. Moreover, this project shows that the use of icons and their culturally established meanings reinforces myths and assumptions about Appalachian people and places. Nevertheless, my goal in this project is not to lay forth a challenge to the perpetuation of stereotypes (although this research contributes to that task), but to see the underlying structures that enable the persistence of stereotypes. Stereotypes make Appalachia appear to be a distinct cultural region, evident by the use of icons to solicit tourists to vacation-lands within Appalachia’s inter-textual boundaries. As the next

chapter shows, stereotypes driving cultural perceptions of Appalachia are supported by a history of pop-culture media and capitalistic enterprise.

The rest of this chapter is devoted to describing the sorts of images available in the tourist art market in Mountainville. The method used to obtain data was a content analysis during which I catalogue every third painting in ten randomly selected galleries selling paintings. The purpose behind this methodology was to survey the range of images. As the content analysis shows, this range includes both images that have no association to local culture or scenery and images that are associated with Appalachian cultural by the perceptions held by artists and tourists.

Content Analysis Results

Conducting a content analysis of every third painting in ten galleries, I catalogued four hundred fifty-five (455) paintings produced by twenty different artists. For each of these paintings or prints I recorded price, physical dimensions, title, artist, and content. I noted when images were repeated as prints throughout the gallery. These prints were catalogued as separate entries often because they contained differences in price and/or dimensions. After describing in full detail the contents of each painting, I labeled each one with a one word subject. This captured the primary subject of the painting. By primary subject, I refer to the image that is a focal point and is supported by other painted elements that form the context of the subject. From a list of subjects, I grouped paintings into categories of type of subjects. See Appendix D and Chapter Three for examples of this analysis and for further detail. I elicited seven types of images spread over the 455 total paintings: buildings, landscapes, florals, wildlife, people, still life, and nautical. Table 5.1 shows number and percentage of paintings with these types of subject images.

Table 5.1 Content Analysis Results

TYPES OF SUBJECT	NUMBER of PAINTINGS	PERCENTAGE
Buildings	135	29.7%
Landscape	77	16.9%
Florals	74	16.3%
Wildlife	68	14.9%
People	62	13.6%
Still Life/ Nautical	39	8.6%
TOTAL	455	100%

Painting Styles

According to the artists and gallery coordinators/owners interviewed, most of Mountainville's paintings are produced in the style of realism. According to art history classifications, realism is the depiction of things as they would be seen in visible nature (de la Croix, Tansey, and Kirkpatrick 1991). Everyday items are often the subject matter of realism. There are varying degrees of realism. Some artists are photo realists while others are romantic realists. This variation of realist styles is detected in the detail and overall depiction of subject matter. The more detail and precise the line and shapes and proportional the subject, the more photo realistic the style of the painting. Romantic realists paint subjects that are clearly identifiable and endowed with emotion, but may lack in precision of color, shape, line, or even context. Many Mountainville artists who paint in this style consider themselves to be impressionistic (Fieldnotes). The content of Mountainville's realism paintings contains idyllic local scenes. In an anthropological sense, these paintings romanticize the local area and reflect the artist's and the tourist's sense of an ideal Appalachian place and culture. Whatever variation within realism techniques there is among Mountainville painters, the realism style dominates and leaves little room for other artistic styles. Virtually no abstract art or expressionist art in which

the subject is non-definable is available in Mountainville's art market- aside from a handful of paintings produced by artists who predominantly paint realistically.

Based on my participant-observation as an art consultant in a downtown gallery, I noticed that tourists generally preferred realist art in the local art market (Fieldnotes). When asked about their personal endeavors in artistic creation, many gallery visitors reported that they were not artistic and could not even draw a straight line (Fieldnotes). Self-perceptions of their lack of artistic achievement derive from cultural notions about artists, as well as the tourist's limited experience with art, which is often influenced by his/her class background. Social background and experience offers some individuals opportunities to gain scholastic understanding of art objects. Art, as a cultural system, is symbolic and requires cultural members to acquire knowledge of codes and meanings in order to participate in the communication process it embodies. Not knowing the codes or lacking knowledge of the history of art movements or the position of art and artists within these movements alienates the viewer and results in interpretations that are based on the viewer's ordinary experiences. Contrary to an elitist approach, these interpretations are legitimate because Western culture perceives art as a subjective system allowing for a variety of interpreted meanings of art pieces. The experienced-based interpretations, which make sense to the viewer, lend to a more comfortable encounter with the art object. Experience-based interpretations without the knowledge of codes and meanings of other styles of art besides realistic art may actually limit the aesthetic resources a viewer can accumulate.

Images of Buildings

Paintings of buildings made up the largest body of images. Almost 30 percent of the total paintings catalogued with an actual number of 135 paintings were categorized as images of buildings because the main subjects were of cabins, churches, barns, bridges, watermills, farm buildings, one-room schools, an outhouse, and a well house. Of twenty artists surveyed in the content analysis, fifteen painted images of architectural structures.

Cabins:

Pioneer cabins made up the largest portion of images of buildings with sixty-two of the 135 paintings making up 38 percent of the building category and 14 percent of the total 455 paintings. Eleven different artists out of the total twenty artists painted an image of a cabin. Paintings of cabins were grouped together because of the depictions of places of residence. Features such as metal roofs, hewn log and mortar construction, rock chimneys, non-railed porches, and one-story designs were consistent throughout these paintings of cabins. Some features might be absent from some paintings or replaced with other features. For example, some cabins were represented with brown-colored wood clapboard instead of the hewn log and mortar construction. Because other identifying features were present in these images, such images of buildings were categorized as cabins. Few paintings of cabins included images of actual people, but most paintings of cabins indicated the presence of people. For example, many images of cabins had smoke rising from the chimney, horse buggies parked nearby, picket fences outlining the yards, and rocking chairs on the porch. These images facilitate an association between the building structures and local place and people. These associations are identified as local history passed on by the artists painting the images and by a body of cultural icons used

in the community to mark cultural heritage. Paintings of cabins that did not indicate people included wildlife common to the local area and popular with visitors. For example, many cabin paintings contained deer, birds, and raccoons. None contained wild boar, which inhabit the area, and are not very common or popular.

Churches:

Ten different artists created twenty-one paintings of churches out of 135 paintings of buildings, making up 13 percent of the building category. All but one of the church paintings were of rural scenes with mountains, woods, cemeteries, and wildlife included in the image. Only one painting was of a church in a city scene. Of the rural church scenes, most of the paintings depicted a one room, white clapboard building with a steeple or bell tower and rock foundation. Many of the paintings depicted one of three specific churches located in or near the national park which are widely visited by tourists. These churches were built in the 19th and early 20th centuries by Baptist, Primitive Baptist, and Methodist congregations (Fieldnotes). Images of local historical churches shore up associations between mountain culture and religious tradition.

Barns:

Paintings of barns make up the last significant category of images of buildings. Six different artists produced fourteen paintings of barns. This number of paintings makes up 9 percent of the architectural images. Three of the artists had multiple prints of the same image available. Of the fourteen paintings there are only eight different images of barns, meaning several of the counted images are prints. The presence of repeated images was a common occurrence in the content analysis and reflects the role of the print industry in the tourist art market. The images of barns depicted the structures as

weathered, gray in color, and of wood construction. Only two images depict a barn in use with one of these featuring men raking hay inside the barn. These images of barns evoke pastoral and agrarian associations made of local Appalachian culture.

Other Images of Buildings:

Covered bridges, street scenes and villages, watermills, houses (non-cabin), stone cottages, farm buildings, a one room schoolhouse, a general store, outhouses, a gazebo, and a well house make up the rest of the images in thirty-eight paintings or 24 percent of the architectural images. The category of architectural images contained twice as much of any of the other categories of paintings.

Landscape Images

Seventy-seven paintings were categorized as landscape images because of their geophysical subject matters. Seventeen percent of all paintings included in the content analysis focused solely on mountains, rivers, waterfalls, sunset, forests, fields, non-building farmscapes, dirt roads, trees, the moon, and a golf course. The landscape category is made up of images that convey vistas and images that do not contain elements of the built environment, the human figure, flora, fauna, or still life objects. Of the twenty artists whose work was analyzed, eleven of these artists painted images of landscapes.

Mountains:

As expected, images of mountainscapes make up the largest group of landscape paintings. Seven artists produced thirty-four paintings which contributed to 7 percent of the total number of paintings catalogued and 44 percent of the landscape paintings. These paintings depicted mountains with eroded, rolling peaks characteristic of the

Appalachian Mountain chain. Mountains were often rendered in the background with the painting foreground including combinations of trees, rocks and boulders, footpaths, streams, or clouds. This body of landscape paintings contained images of mountain scenes in all four seasons, although there are a higher number of mountains in snow.

Rivers:

More artists painted river scenes, but the total number of river paintings was less than that of mountains. Nine artists painted sixteen river scenes. Many of these scenes included elements of other landscape categories, like mountains or flowers, but the subject and main focus of the painting was a flowing body of water often identified in the title of the painting.

Waterfalls:

The third significant category of landscape paintings consists of representations of waterfalls. Only three artists produced eight paintings of waterfalls, and three of these eight paintings were of the same image. Although waterfalls in the national park were a popular destination with park visitors, this content analysis does not indicate waterfalls were a popular subject to paint.

Other Landscape Images:

The remaining nineteen paintings of landscapes featured sunsets reflected on mountains or rivers, views of forests and trees, scenes of fields and farmscapes, or depictions of a golf course, a dirt road, and the moon.

Floral Images

The third largest category of images catalogue turned out to be floral images. Of the total number of paintings, 16 percent or seventy-four paintings fall into this category.

Seven of the twenty artists produced these paintings whose subjects represented various blooms, leaves, or berries. This category proved very difficult to organize because of the range of flowers painted. Many of the floral images represented flowers found locally and commonly in the National Park (Fieldnotes). These include dogwood blossoms, black-eyed Susies, Queen Anne's lace, daffodils, violets, bee balm, sunflowers, foxgloves, rhododendron, magnolia blossoms, holly berries, and other wildflowers. More cultivated flowers like roses, gladiolas, irises, geraniums, holly hocks, zinnias, water lilies, and hibiscus were also portrayed in these paintings. Of all the images of blossoms, the dogwood blossom was most prevalent. Tree leaves, especially in their autumn colors, was another repeated subject.

Wildlife Images

The fourth category of images represents animals as subjects. This category represents 15 percent of the total number of paintings with an exact number of sixty-eight paintings. Paintings in this category represent wildlife that is local to the area (Fieldnotes). All but images of horses represent non-domesticated animals. Most of the paintings also include context environments in which the specific animals would be found. Few paintings were portraits of animals.

Bears:

Not surprisingly, the most common image of wildlife is of the black bear. Of the sixty-eight paintings in this category, nineteen depict black bears. Images of black bears include bears in their natural habitat. For example, many paintings were of a bear or bears walking through rhododendron, standing near a mountain stream, with their cubs on logs or in rocky areas, or placed near a single room church or school. Black bears are the

most common images of wildlife in this area. Beyond paintings, images of the black bear, presented as a friendly, cute, and childlike animal, greet and host visitors to their mountain experience. Such images of black bears can be seen in or on store fronts, restaurant signs, trolley cars, hotel lobbies, and advertisements both in print and in television commercials for the town itself. The image of the black bear has certainly achieved iconic status for the local area as proven by the use of the bear as the sports mascot for the local high school (Fieldnotes). Moreover, many gallery visitors who also visit the national park expressed their hope to me to see a black bear (Fieldnotes). Sightings are cause for great excitement among tourists and can be a real disappointment if they do not occur. Given this desire for an encounter with a black bear, many products with bears are present in the local market. Furniture, linens, dishware, toys, and clothing are some of the products with bears. Of the overall paintings catalogued, only 4 percent contain bears as the subject. Perhaps this illustrates the preference of tourists for other bear products rather than paintings.

Birds:

Depiction of birds makes up the second largest collection of wildlife. Fourteen bird paintings were catalogued and can be further divided into one of two styles: realism and caricature. Of the five artists that created images of birds, four artists painted commonly seen local birds (Fieldnotes). These four artists included tree branches, forest scenes, or fence posts to give context to the subject bird/s. One artist in particular focused on producing animal images with little natural context and with lots of human qualities thereby adding to the animal's personification. This artist painted birds as if they were frazzled, stressed creatures with spiked and disheveled feathers and oversized eyes.

Other Wildlife:

The remainder of paintings categorized as wildlife includes subjects of a variety of animals- most of which inhabit the Appalachian region. These wildlife subjects include deer, wolves, rabbits, butterflies, elk, dove, trout, fox, bobcat, owl, mouse, raccoon, and squirrel. Horses were a common subject indicating their importance as a livestock animal. Interestingly, no paintings with cattle, a more staple livestock, were randomly selected for the analysis. Such paintings and those of chickens, turkeys, and sheep were observed.

Images of People

Paintings of people make up the fifth category of images catalogued in the retail galleries. Sixty-two images account for 14 percent of the total of paintings analyzed. Images within this category were separated into two sub-categories: portrait and human subject in action. Because a portrait painter's gallery was selected for this analysis, almost two-thirds of the images of people are portraits. The remaining third depict people doing things. Nine different artists created pictures of people.

Portraits:

Generally, most art patrons reported to me that they do not purchase images of people they do not know (Fieldnotes). One artist, however, focuses his art entirely on portraits of people he considers the essence of Appalachian culture. In an interview, this artist described Appalachian culture as a way of life suspended in time:

“When I paint a person from Appalachia I am interested in hopefully finding a person who is in some way connected to the old ways,...close to the earth, close to the way they used to be...Now when you're into Appalachian parts..., there's different pockets that I've been to that you would think that you were still in the thirties....Some have electric,

some don't and they are very, very close to the earth, and they're usually strange, not always, but they're usually the friendliest...They could have moved out of there long ago, and because they chose to live... that lifestyle, that is....what gets me, because [they] didn't have to live that way. They chose to live that way. That turns me on" (Interview PM).

Indeed, this artist's goal is to capture and preserve a lifestyle that he sees disappearing.

Thus, he chooses to paint people who are ageing and who continuing a livelihood of farming. In such subjects, this artist stylistically paints realism, capturing every wrinkle, loose hair, and whisker of the model. Moreover, each person is depicted in period clothing that references late 1800s to early 1900s fashion, especially gunny sack dresses and shawls, overalls, and felt hats. Subjects are often placed in dark backgrounds that indicate poorly lit homes or even barns. There are also portraits of young people, mostly pre-school age, wearing similar garb indicating a historical era. Of the forty paintings and prints of people portraits in this sample, only one portrait of Jesus was produced by a second artist.

Subjects in Action:

Many more artists depicted people in action. Seven different artists produced twenty-two paintings and prints that suggest activity. These action paintings include people fishing, fiddling, working on a farm lot or in a garden, selling fruit, going to church, riding in a wagon, being baptized, walking through a snowstorm, and riding a horse. These images contain contextual clues that indicate to the viewer the livelihood, the belief system, and the historical era to which the people subjects belong.

Other Images

The remaining 8 percent of the catalogued paintings are still-lifes and nautical. Lighthouses make up the largest body of painting subjects in the category of other images. Twenty-six total paintings or 67 percent of the other images inventoried contained lighthouses as the main subject. Initially, I categorized paintings of lighthouses as buildings, since lighthouse are constructed by people. Because lighthouses are physically present in a different geographical environment than non-coastal Appalachian Mountains, I selected to recategorize lighthouse as other images.

Lighthouses may seem out of place in a mountain tourist town. The presence of such a subject demonstrates that not all artists are painting local scenes. Moreover, the economic support of paintings of lighthouses shows that consumers are purchasing this non-local image. Still, the portion of lighthouse images has more to do with the activity level of painting by one artist than with the typicality of subjects. Content analysis found that two artists painted lighthouses, and one of these artists produced just one lighthouse painting. The remaining twenty-five paintings were painted by one artist who specializes in lighthouses, and markets himself as a lighthouse painter. In fact, his gallery is decorated with nautical items like fish nets, life savers, lobster crates, and a twelve foot replica of a lighthouse (Fieldnotes).

The inclusion of these paintings of lighthouse images in the content analysis creates an outlier and has perhaps skewed the distribution of images, yet it also sheds light on the presence and range of variation of images available to consumers. Indeed, some tourists in Mountainville also vacation at the ocean and may like ocean scenes. The presence of lighthouse images in the art market of Mountainville also reflects the

religious affiliation made about Appalachia since lighthouses were reported to me to be a common Christian symbol (Fieldnotes). Both galleries exhibiting paintings of lighthouse reported that these images are often purchased for churches or for pastors (Fieldnotes).

The remaining eleven paintings produced by four artists depicted seven cultural objects that have no relevancy to the previous categories. These seven subjects include a bucket of apples, a military helmet, musical instruments, a book with a rose, stained glass, cooking stove abandoned outdoors, and toys. In addition to these still-life paintings, two additional artists produced images of boats in seascapes.

Correlation of Catalogued Images to Conceptualizations of Appalachia

Once images in paintings were catalogued, the next task was to evaluate how the images compared to Appalachian stereotypes and icons. Data about stereotypes present in the perceptions of Mountainville artists and gallery owners, as well as community leaders, were gathered during interviews. At the end of each interview, the interviewee was asked to free list stereotypes he/she associated with Appalachian culture. Then each person was asked to free list icons or imagery that he/she considered to represent Appalachian culture. This order presented the responder with time to consider his/her notions of Appalachia and how his/her notions might be visualized. After the free lists were collected, responses were coded and categorized. Number of responses was tallied to indicate predominance of icons in the interviewees' perceptions of Appalachian representation. The free listing exercise was specifically conducted to determine the relationship between what participants, particularly artists, perceived as Appalachian icons and what subjects they painted.

Free Listing Stereotypes

At the end of each interview, participants were given a worksheet to write down (or draw as the case was for a couple of artists) as many stereotypes as they could recall about Appalachian culture only. Thirty-one interviewees participated in this written exercise. Because most of the participants were not from Appalachia and had moved to Mountainville from other places in the U.S., this exercise helped determine their understandings of regional cultural assumptions and factual knowledge about the Appalachian region and culture. Many participants said to me that some of the stereotypes they listed were misrepresentative and that other stereotypes they considered accurate. The results, displayed in Table 5.2 below and in Appendix C, show that participants are aware of stereotypes that refer mostly to character and personality traits of Appalachian people. Positive traits like neighborly, helpful, and friendly as well as honest, hardworking, and gentle ranked highest in responses, but culturally negative traits like lazy, stubborn, and racist were also mentioned.

Table 5.2 Stereotypes Recalled by Artists and Gallery Owners

RANK	CODED CATEGORIES OF LISTED STEREOTYPES	EXAMPLES OF LISTED RESPONSES OF STEREOTYPES	ACTUAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES
1	Character/ Personality Traits	independent, neighborly, helpful, friendly, sharing, kind, gentle, hardworking, satisfied, honest, resourceful, proud, patriotic, lazy, stubborn, racist, feuding, boring	48
2	Material Landscape	porches, trucks, guns, wood houses, grits, moonshine stills, whiskey, wagons	21
3	Non-Educated	ignorant, inarticulate, uneducated, non-educated, high school dropout, backwards, lack of sophistication, eating road kill, inability to communicate	22

4	Isolated	isolated, backwoods, private, not open to outsiders, standoff-ish, distrustful	20
5	Traditional	non-modern, historical, people living in the past, church gathering, God fearing, primitive, plain folk, simple, take care of their own, conservative, behind time and trends	19
6	Body Image	bad teeth, no teeth, barefoot, corn cob pipe, funny old hat, no shoes, overalls, long beards, accent, pregnant, dirty	18
7	Caricatures	hillbilly, mountain people, redneck, misrepresented	15
8	Poverty	poor, government support, poverty, broke	9
9	Environmental Landscape	mountains, property conscious	4
	TOTAL		176 (responses from 31 interviewees)

The second through sixth ranked categories are very close in actual number of responses. Moreover, these categories reflect cultural traits as opposed to more individual traits of the highest ranked category. This distribution suggests that the participants may have provided responses initially from personal experiences with neighbors and acquaintances whom the participants perceive as more representative of Appalachia than themselves. These initial responses make up the character/personality traits category. That the participants listed more widening cultural traits indicates the deep enculturation of the American cognizance towards the Appalachian region and culture- even in people who live and work in Appalachia!

Because artists, who made up a majority of the interview population, tend to be more visual in their thinking, the second category of stereotypes includes objects from an Appalachian material landscape- things like moonshine, wood-side houses, broken down porches, old pickup trucks, shot guns, and grits. These are items not distinct to the

Appalachian region, but are commonly used in the American mindset to refer to parts of Appalachia that are perceived as economically poor, culturally backwards, and rurally isolated. The third category includes responses like uneducated, ignorant, inarticulate, and not smart reflecting the strong and discriminating stereotype of Appalachian people as non- and under-educated. The fourth category, “isolated,” groups answers like backwoods, private, not open to outsiders, standoff-ish, and never leaves the mountains. What may be seen as an effect of perceived isolation is the fifth category, “traditional.” When participants listed the stereotypes they associated with Appalachia, many of them referred to the conventional and historical way of life involving kin networks, religion, and custom. Responses in this category are people living in the past, historical, non-modern, behind the times, conservative, God-fearing, church gatherings, family works together, and good home and family, expressing cultural notions of traditional lifestyles and values. Participants also gave several responses describing the appearance of Appalachian people. The category “body image” includes bad teeth, barefoot, pregnant, dirty, corn cob pipe, tall, skinny, overalls, no shoes, long beards, and funny hats. The category “caricatures” organizes those responses that are often used to identify people from Appalachia, as well as other rural areas in the U.S. Hillbilly, mountain people, and rednecks were cited by participants but do not adequately define the meanings associated with such labeled groups.

Filling out the category “poverty” are responses like poor, government support, broke, and poverty. Many of the above responses could be categorized as indicators of poverty, signifying the dotted lines of research codes. However, the categories as they have been delineated effectively illustrate the visions that stereotypes convey. Responses

conveying participants' understandings of the Appalachian stereotyped ties to the land, mountains, and nature were lower than expected. With only four responses, the category of "environmental landscape" contains mountains and property consciousness. As will be discussed below, an attachment to the land is seen as a significant characteristic of Appalachian people by the tourist surveyed in this project.

Free Listing Iconography

In addition to a free list of stereotypes associated with Appalachian culture, interviewees were also asked to free list Appalachian iconography. This created a second list to which correlations might be made between images catalogued in galleries and conceptualizations of Appalachia. Nineteen individuals participated and wrote out their list of Appalachian iconography. Because this question was less understood, it was elaborated by me asking participants to think of images or pictures of Appalachia or what they might think would be in a painting connoting Appalachian stereotypes. Responses were coded and categorized according to the codes used in the painting content analysis. Using the same codes helped to make a more valid comparison of images participants perceived to be Appalachian and what images were actually produced for the tourist art market.

Table 5.3 Iconography Recalled by Artists and Gallery Owners

RANK	CODED CATEGORIES OF LISTED ICONS	EXAMPLES OF LISTED RESPONSES OF ICONS	ACTUAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES
1	Material Landscape	handmade objects, moonshine, corn cob pipes, cornbread, overalls, shot guns, rock walls and fences, straw hats, brooms, weaving, laundry, gingham shirts	34
2	Building Structures	cabins, outhouses, barns, churches, corn crib	30

3	Social Traits	isolated, traditional, lazy, simple life, friendly	18
4	Environmental Landscapes	mountains, rivers	10
5	Caricatures	hillbilly, plenty of kids, mountain people, farmers, old people	10
6	Wildlife	bears, dogs, chicken, goats	8
7	Floral	dogwoods, wildflowers	2
	TOTAL		112 (responses from 19 interviewees)

The highest ranking category of free listed icons includes responses referring to the physical and material landscape of Appalachia. Responses reveal what denoted signs of Appalachian culture and people were evoked by participants' recollections of stereotypes of Appalachian connotations. Interviewees most often listed moonshine, clothing (overalls, straw hats, torn shirts, hanging laundry), tools (shot gun, water barrel), and handmade objects (brooms, corncob pipes, pottery, wood, weaving) as images of Appalachian stereotypes. When prompted, participants thought frequently of images of buildings that represented Appalachia, including cabins, outhouses, barns, and churches. Building icons make the second largest category of responses. The tendency of artists to visualize Appalachia through buildings resonates with the high frequency of building images in the body of paintings catalogued through the content analysis.

The remaining categories of responses contain less than half of total responses given by participants. Thus, interviewees, many of whom were artists, could imagine more easily images of Appalachia that fall into material culture and buildings. These other categories of responses indicate that character traits (traditional, lazy, simple, unclean, unkept, friendly), landscapes (mountains, rivers), personalities and persons

(Elvis, Dolly Parton, hillbilly, mountain people), and wildlife (bears, dogs) are significant in the way stereotypes are understood and embodied by Mountainville tourism industry producers.

Comparing the interviewees' lists of stereotypes to their lists of icons yields three noteworthy observations. First of all, when listing icons and images of Appalachia, a significant number of participants listed images of buildings, yet building structures were not listed as stereotypes. Cabins, churches, barns, etc. were not listed by participants when asked to provide their sense of Appalachian stereotypes. Yet, such buildings, according to the data from the content analysis, are used to visualize "Appalachian" scenes and do rank high in catalogued gallery paintings. The reason such icons are present in paintings as well as artists' conceptions of Appalachia may have more to do with artists' experiences in the local landscape of Mountainville's tourism industry than with the general region of Appalachia. Because the adjacent national park has preserved many of the 1800s dwellings and outbuildings, many residents and tourists see and experience these structures. Over time, the vernacular architecture incarnated the local tourist attractions. As a recognizable cultural icon, such images became useful tools for selling art of the local area. Thus, artists, acting as consumers of images and meaning, incorporate the connotations of Appalachian culture that symbols of building structures carry.

A second observation when comparing the free listing of stereotypes to the free listing of icons of Appalachia is of the "character traits" category. This category of responses ranks first in the list of stereotypes and third in the list of icons. Because of the difficulty of painting abstractions like personality traits and mannerisms (how does one

convey friendliness or gentleness?), character traits are simply more readily verbalized than visualized. This logistical dilemma may explain why when picturing the poverty of the region, artists were quick to cite images of falling over mailboxes, leaky roofs, and old cars. Some personality characteristics are too abstract to convey visually in an art world dominated by a realistic style⁸.

Finally, there is no category of “other” among the responses for icons. Although some feedback from participants may have fit in multiple categories, there were no outlying answers. A lack of outliers or miscellaneous icons might indicate how succinct and how enculturated cultural images of Appalachia occur in this group of participants, as well as reflect my expectations as a researcher.

When comparing the free list of icons to the catalogue of actual images for sale in galleries, the “material landscape” category is quite differentiated. Images of material culture rank highest in the responses given by participants, especially artists, as expected pictures of Appalachia, yet such images are almost absent in the sample of paintings analyzed in galleries. Whereas, images of building structures such as cabins, barns, and churches rank second in the list of icons and were the most common subjects according to the content analysis. Perhaps the most sufficient explanation for this disparity regards the still life painting genre. As the subject of a painting, the material objects listed as icons by participants (tools, moonshine, overalls, etc.) would most likely be depicted in inanimate still lifes. Still life paintings are not as popular as other subjects because they are often subdued and may not hold enough emotion for the viewer (Fieldnotes). Especially in a tourist market where tourists are experiencing what they perceive as

⁸Personality traits may be better communicated as emotions through abstract-styled art.

exotic landscapes, or in the case of Appalachia, exotic cultural spaces, still life paintings receive little attention next to the flare of a dramatic mountain scene or the personal connection felt in a painting of a cabin one has visited (Fieldnotes).

The disparity between the presence of material landscape in the icons participants suggested and the absence of such icons in the actual paintings may reflect the coding methods used in this research. Many of the objects listed as icons by artists are less the subject of the painting and more a part of the background of the subject. In the coding process, paintings were coded and categorized based on the dominant subject and not on accompanying content. The material landscape icons as participants envision them may be portrayed in art market paintings, but they are not the focus of such paintings.

For example, the focus of a painting entitled “Good Neighbor” is a man who appears to be sixty years old (See Figure 1.3). In the painting, the subject is dressed in overalls and sitting in the back of a 1940s model truck filled with orange pumpkins. It is a fall scene with yellow leafed trees and a gray clapboard farm house with a tin roof in the background. Next to the truck is a pumpkin patch. The material objects, the overalls, truck, pumpkins, farm house, tin roof, and clapboard siding, make up the context of the subject and were subsequently recorded by me in the analysis of the painting, but were not listed as the focal point or the dominant subject of the painting. The man is the subject, both visually and according to the title given to the painting by the artist.

It is not surprising that interviewees can easily list Appalachian stereotypes and iconography. As cultural members of the American mainstream, the artists, gallery coordinators/workers, and community members I interviewed are enculturated with institutionalized ideas of Appalachian culture. Although many artists admittedly realize

that such ideas are inaccurate and non-representative, these artists are constrained by structural forces of the market to utilize such ideas in their paintings in order to sell them. An inquiry into the penetration of stereotypes in the perceptions of Appalachian culture held by tourists visiting Mountainville offers some insight into why artists as producers of local imagery are compelled to paint images and icons that constrict understandings of Appalachia.

Ranked Stereotypes Held by Buyers, non-Buyers, and Artists

In four different locations throughout the summer and fall seasons, surveys were conducted with gallery visitors after they exited the gallery. One hundred twelve surveys were collected from eighteen art buyers and ninety-four non-buyers. Survey questions asked visitors to provide up to four responses of what they know about people living in Appalachia. The responses were coded, categorized, and tallied by me. Survey response codes correspond to the codes used to analyze the free lists of stereotypes provided by artists, gallery owners, and community leaders. Because the sample numbers for the groups are uneven and small for buyers, tallies for each category are not listed in the chart below. The ranking of categories provides a peek into the kinds of stereotypes tourists associate with people from Appalachia.

Table 5.4 Comparison of Responses from Tourists and Artists Recalling Stereotypes of Appalachia

COMPARISON of RESPONSES RECALLING STEREOTYPES of APPALACHIA			
RANK	ART BUYING TOURISTS (18 participants responding)	ART NON-BUYING TOURISTS (94 participants responding)	ARTISTS (31 participants responding)
1	Personality Traits	Personality Traits	Personality Traits

2	Poverty and Under-education	Crafts/ Artistic	Poverty and Under-education ⁹
3	Environmental Landscape	Poverty and Under-education	Material Landscape
4	Crafts/Artistic	Slower Pace & Isolated	Isolated (but not slower pace)
5	Know Nothing of Appalachia	Environmental Landscape	Heritage/ Traditional
6	Slower Pace (but not isolation)	Know Nothing of Appalachia	Body Image
7		Heritage/Tradition	Environmental Landscape

Stereotypes relating to individual personality traits rank highest with all three groups (art buying tourists, art non-buying tourists, and artists). Traits like friendly and hardworking were most frequently cited by surveyed gallery visitors as characteristic of Appalachian people. All three groups also see poverty and under-education as key elements in describing Appalachian culture. The stereotype depicting Appalachian people as craftsmen using non-machined tools to produce necessary goods is ranked higher by tourists, but not significant by artists' accounts. That this survey was conducted in Mountainville's arts and crafts community immediately following a tourist's visit to a gallery and their immediate experience with craftspeople may explain why tourists perceive Appalachian folk to be craft producers more so than the artists themselves.

To decipher whom tourists identified as Appalachian people, the survey very broadly asked participants to list their encounters with Appalachian people. Of the encounters tourists listed, 39 percent were encounters with artists and craftspeople, followed by 17 percent with restaurant and shop employees, and 13 percent from visits to

⁹In this chart, stereotypes artists free listed as poverty and under-educated have been collapsed into one category to be consistent with tourists' responses. Moreover, poverty often coincides with under-education.

the national park. Thus, tourists believe that artists and craftsmen are representative of Appalachian people, and that many of the people who work in Mountainville's tourism industry are identified as Appalachian. To note, the national park service preserves historic buildings and landmarks and usually exhibits information about the families that lived within the park boundaries. Tourists consider viewing these exhibits and touring the park as an encounter with Appalachian people, albeit Appalachian people who lived in the past.

Comparisons between the tourists' and artists' categories of response of stereotypes yield some interesting, yet small differences. The lists differ most noticeably with the present of material landscape and body image in the artists' replies and the absence of such categories in the tourists' replies. This data indicates that artists are generally more visually oriented and subsequently associate culture with objects and personal appearance. These categories ("material landscape" and "body images") tend to also be more negative and personal in their connotation. Tourists may have been hesitant to list anything but positive comments, aside from regional poverty and isolation, about whom they see as their hosts.

Despite these subtle differences, the associations made about Appalachian culture by tourists and artists seem to be congruent and consistent. Why such homogenous perceptions of Appalachian culture perpetuate may have much to do with the socio-historical construction of Appalachia as a distinct culture and the enculturation of this perception into the public mind set. Because artists generally believe that they must produce art that connects with the tourist who expects and experiences deeply embedded Appalachian cultural essentializations, these essentializations become a part of the artists'

repertoire of images and icons. Keeping in mind that some artists may not believe that such icons are representative of Appalachian culture, they still contribute to the perpetuation of the stereotypes in order to make a livelihood. Thus, structural forces, like the tourist market, are the main impetus for the consistency between stereotypes provided by artists and tourists. This is not to say that individuals are duped into believing cultural propaganda, but rather they, in the case of artists, select culturally appropriate images while at the same time maintain the integrity of their individual artistic vision.

This selection of stereotypical images by artists to express their artistic vision relates directly to the conundrum of authenticity cited earlier in Chapter Two. The conundrum of authenticity accounts for the varying levels of authenticity prescribed to images depicted in paintings for sale in Mountainville art galleries. At the extremes of this conundrum, cultural icons are considered authentic to individuals who find the icons to mean something personal to them, while these same cultural icons may not be judged authentic because they do not accurately represent local populations, landscapes, or culture. Additionally, the market dominance of some icons makes them seem authenticated. Thus, these images are reproduced in art work by artists conforming to market preferences desperate to make a living. This conformity may deny an artist that which is truly his/her artistic uniqueness and contributes to a sense of inauthenticity. Still, other artists who do not purposefully conform to market preferences find that the market supports what they sincerely love to paint. Reasons artists give for painting particular subjects in particular styles are further developed in Chapters Six and Seven. Turning to who buys what paintings and why needs to be examined first.

Who Buys the Paintings?

In addition to asking for information about what tourists know about Appalachia, the survey also asked for demographic information. This data is based on only eighteen of the 112 survey participants who admitted to buying paintings or prints during the twelve periods of surveying (three times at each of the four galleries over summer and fall). Thus, this data is not statistically reliable. The objective for this data was to provide a glimpse into the kinds of tourists that may come to Mountainville. The chart below presents the demographic data.

Table 5.5 Demographics of Tourists

	ART BUYING TOURISTS (18 participants responding)	ART NON-BUYING TOURISTS (94 participants responding)
ETHNICITY	94% Caucasian 6% African-American	84% Caucasian 2% Native American, 2% Hispanic 2% Asian 10% no response
GENDER OF PARTICIPANT	66% Female 33% Male	60% Female 32% Male 5% Male and Female 3% no response
AGE	45 years	54 years
RETIRED	41% yes 59% no	25% yes 73% no 2% no response
OCCUPATION	no responses	architect, educator, farmer, software, restaurateur, attorney, housewife
LEVEL OF EDUCATION	29% High School Graduate 29% Some College 13% Associates Degree 29% Masters Degree	2% Less than High School 27% High School Graduate 13% Some College 11% Associates Degree 30% Bachelor Degree 15% Masters Degree 2% PhD Degree
ANNUAL INCOME	\$66,900.00	\$63,175.000

ORIGIN	24% Tennessee 17% Florida 17% Kentucky 17% Ohio 5% Alabama 5% Arizona 5% Indiana 5% Michigan 5% New Jersey	16% Tennessee 13% Kentucky 11% Indiana 9% Alabama 9% Florida 6% Ohio 5% Georgia 5% North Carolina 5% Virginia 21% Fifteen Other States
APPALACHIAN IDENTITY	67% no 22% yes 11% not sure	72% no 17% yes 8% not sure 3% no response
LENGTH OF STAY	5 days	5 days
NUMBER IN PARTY	4 people	4 people

Very generally, tourists who completed this survey are white, middle-aged, college educated women¹⁰ earning a middle class income and living in a State with counties designated as part of the Appalachian region (Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia). They came to Mountainville for less than a week with husbands, family or friends. Although, this survey data is not statistically reliable even when supplemented by observation methods, the data presents a sketch of who vacations in Mountainville. The chart makes it easy to see that there are no real demographic differences between tourists who purchased paintings or prints and those who did not.

Information analyzed from survey data, artists interviews, and observations indicate, rather anecdotally, that gallery visitors tend to hold positions within the middle class rather than the working/ blue collar class. Because these consumers have limited

¹⁰ Although more women completed the survey than men, many of the survey questions were answered by a couple.

means to spend on something disposable like a print or painting, artists must provide a product that matches the income level of their patrons. Therefore, the socio-economic backgrounds of the current tourist population affect the kinds of art that are available in Mountainville's tourist market. This, in turn, positions the artists in Mountainville within the lower tiers of the national art market.

Describing the national art market adds context to the kind and type of paintings that are produced and consumed in Mountainville. In order to understand this context, Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical formulations about symbolic and cultural capital prove useful. According to Pierre Bourdieu, a logic of cultural taste can be detected in the hierarchy of value assigned to cultural events or artifacts (Bourdieu 1984). Categories of art and distinctions among tastes of art styles are informed by a cultural logic that reflects social class structures.

In the case of the national art hierarchy, the New York art market is positioned at the most valuable top. It is hegemonic in its relationships to regional and local markets on three measures, according to Plattner's ethnography of the art market in St. Louis. One, New York's is the largest art market with 700-800 galleries and museums, plus dealers, art magazines, auction houses, and artists (McCarthy, et al 2005). Secondly, New York art market has "controlled the definition of 'interesting' or 'important' art in the entire country" (Jeffri 2005; Plattner 1996:8). As well, only paintings exhibited in New York's elite galleries make for significant art history. A third behavioral measure indicating the dominance of the New York art market in the national market is the frequency of and ease for New York dealers to send their artists' work to galleries located in other places

compared to the difficulty dealers in smaller cities have in sending their artists' work to galleries in New York (Plattner 1996:9).

Characterized by art possessed by museums, upper class art collectors, and high end galleries, as well as commissioned and/or collected by business institutions, the New York art market further reflects elite class-based interests because "elites are oriented towards financial centers" (McCarthy, et al. 2005; Plattner 1996:6; Robertson 2005). The art moving within this stratus of the art hierarchy is "challenging to the average viewer, difficult to interpret, and sometimes ugly, confusing, or otherwise upsetting,...[but] for the connoisseur, high art can stimulate intense emotional and intellectual responses" (Jeffri 2005; Plattner 1996:7). This art often contains visual codes that require deeper knowledge and cognitive ability than what is learned in ordinary experience. Bourdieu labels this kind of art "autonomous" because of its separation from conventional visual codes. People who are exposed to and build knowledge of autonomous art beyond its functional purpose contribute to their cultural capital and express their symbolic capital through the "intense emotional and intellectual responses" high art can stimulate (Plattner 1996:7; Robertson 2005). Seeing this as a normal and appropriate activity is a reflection of one's upper class position and taste.

Moving to the next layer less in cultural value, middle class art still possesses degrees of autonomy and critical acclaim. This art, however, is created by artists who "appeal to the most popular taste" (Plattner 1996:7). Much of this art is mass-produced (Storey 1993). The art that moves within this tier is collected by professionals and executives, who may still be art connoisseurs, but who may collect popular art as decoration or to perform some utility. Popular art is more intended for the consumer, and

less for the connoisseur as it makes “no pretense of a transcendental effects on the viewer” (Plattner 1996:6; Storey 1993). Popular art is considered working class art, and, according to the Frankfurt School, is purely decorative and is not intellectually provocative, although pop art may be emotionally stimulating (Storey 1993).

In this middle level of the national hierarchy, art works are reproduced in such large quantities to fill market demands that it is dispossessed and cannot be possessed by any singular person or small group. If such large volumes of an image are consumed by thousands, then who is the owner of the image? Popular art is purchased for delight and realism with little contribution to one’s cultural capital. It may not make any visionary or transcendental statements about society or make any contributions to aesthetic criticism or academic discourse (Story 1993). Popular art contains conventional images or customary styles of design (Rippe 2006: 1443). The art of painters who repeatedly reproduce strong conventional visual codes in their work and who do not provoke the viewer’s intellect or emotion because they use customary and ordinary design form the craft painting category of art. Craft paintings are a form of popular art because they lack autonomy. Their purpose is to decorate, although they are not usually mass produced.

Within the national market, art produced and consumed in Mountainville is contextualized in the popular art tier with a few artists who have achieved values of middle class tastes and some others who produced primarily craft paintings. Art here is localized, conventional, and reproduced into limited numbers of prints. Although some Mountainville artists may be juried and accepted into membership of national art societies, they have no presence in the top of the national art hierarchy. Their art is most popular in Mountainville because it reflects the tastes of the class of people visiting.

Class indicators are evident in what people buy. Moreover, these art patrons are not coming to Mountainville to purchase art; they come to Mountainville to relax and recuperate. Thus, their purchases are a consequence of their vacation. This research suggests that the purpose of Mountainville art is to support the vacation experience- which explains why artists must create art that is readable and relatable to the class backgrounds of tourists. Because artists are constrained by economic forces, they consume images and meanings reproducing such icons in their art and reflecting the class logic of their middle to working class patrons.

Tastes and preferences are linked to the cultural capital that one has accumulated, particularly through educational experiences. Educational backgrounds influence art preferences and reflect socio-economic means to access such education. When a viewer experiences a painting, he/she understands to a degree the art embedded in that image. The degree to which he/she understands indicates the viewer's educational background and class position. When considering purchasing art pieces, as gallery visitors are encouraged to do, viewers may also envision how the art codes in a particular painting might be read by friends, acquaintance, and guests to their home. In addition to indicating class attributes, what art a person buys reinforces social differences between those who have means to symbolically and economically to buy and those who do not. Expressing the viewer's cultural capital, especially to an audience of peers, makes a painting more appealing to purchase.

What Images Are They Buying?

Because tourists visiting Mountainville predominantly come from middle to working class backgrounds, they demand and buy art that is realistic- that is, easily

defined subjects created with conventional visual codes that tourists understand. Realism is appealing to tourists because their cultural capital affords them the background and experience to understand the art. When codes embedded in art can be decoded by the viewer, the experience of looking at the art, and possessing the art, is pleasurable and comforting. According to Bourdieu, a viewer “who lacks the specific code feels lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythms, colors and lines, without rhyme or reason” (Bourdieu 1984:3). The viewer cannot move beyond interpreting meaning in the painting based on ordinary experience or sensible properties. She/he cannot decode or tap into the cognition of cultural codes without sufficient cultural capital. The capital of a middle to working class position enables tourists to decipher conventional visual codes with ease. Paintings positioned higher in the art hierarchy consist of codes that middle to working class educational backgrounds have not learned. This is not to say the capacity to learn is absent, but that the learning of non-conventional codes by the viewer has not taken place and, further, may not seem class appropriate. Thus, class backgrounds of tourists are a significant force in the kinds and contents of paintings that are available in Mountainville’s art market.

There is another force that impacts the kinds of painting contents. Data from surveys measuring reasons for purchases indicate that tourists purchased paintings and prints of realistic landscapes, architecture, and wildlife because of sentiments and affections which may transcend class lines. These number and kind of subjects purchased reflect the frequency of the subject categories according to the content analysis conducted in Mountainville’s galleries. Survey questions asked why these subjects appealed to the participant. Responses are ranked and listed in the chart below. According to the

responses, buyers find these subjects appealing, not specifically because of their class positions, but because of the emotional response or experience the buyer had with the subject. Indeed most of the survey participants came to Mountainville because of the geographic and natural attractions as well as the emotionalized experience with beauty and peacefulness. An emic perspective yields a patterning of consumption and Appalachian icons based on personal experience and feelings which may or may not be conditioned by class structures.

Why Are They Buying?

Because gallery visitors may not actually purchase paintings they find appealing, another survey question asked participants for their reasons leading to the actual purchase of a painting. These reasons are presented in Table 5.6 below, and indicate the satisfaction of several criteria that factor into an art purchase. First and foremost, the subject was something the buyer wanted to possess, perhaps because it held an emotional attachment to the viewer. Colors and style in the painting matched the buyer's tastes and the price, ranging from \$10.00 to \$200.00 with an average of \$80.00, fit into his/her budget. Many artists have loyal patrons who consistently collect multiple works. Serving a basic function of art, art consumers use their new possessions to enhance and add ornamentation to their surroundings.

I learned of two survey participants who only bought a painting because they really enjoyed their experience with the artist. Such an experience is part of a pattern of personalized service that artists offer in order to facilitate sales. Overall, I interpret that tourists are buying paintings because of the emotional reaction they experience towards the subject matter. Furthermore, they decide to buy paintings because the value of

physical possession of that which they came to experience outweighs the actual cost of the art.

In addition to asking why art was purchased, the survey asked non-buying tourists why they did not purchase art. Although most gallery visitors were open to considering a purchase, many of them did not make an emotional connection to the art they saw.

Emotion as a factor in consumption of art cannot be underscored enough. According to one gallery manager, “emotion sells” (Fieldnotes). Indeed, O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy argue that “emotion is always a factor in [consumer] decision-making...and that consumers are influenced by either the way products are presented or the emotional context of buying (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2003: vi). Thus, if there is not strong emotional reaction that leads to a desire to possess, then purchases will likely be avoided. Even visitors who have no intention of buying art can be persuaded if the emotional experience is powerful enough. Other key factors in not buying include the cost of the painting and no space to transport it or exhibit it. These factors relate to tourists’ limited resources, and present real challenges to artists who want to sell their work. Offering a range of price points, a range of sizes, and shipping are strategies employed by artists to offset any constraints tourists may have towards art possession. These and other strategies are further discussed in Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight.

Table 5.6 Appealing Qualities and Purchase Motivations

APPEAL TO BUYERS	REASONS TOURISTS DID BUY	REASONS TOURISTS DID NOT BUY
Connects to Buyer’s Emotion/ Experience	Subject	Moderate Intent to Buy
Subject	Pleasing Emotional Response	No Intent to Buy
Color	Colors	Considering Decision to Buy
Artist’s Style and Expression	Artist’s Style	Cost

Looks Realistic	Price	No Space to Transport or Place
Price	Adds to Collection	Does Not Fit Decor
	Decorates	Other Reasons
	Personal Experience with the Artist	Already Purchased a Piece
		No Time to Consider Buying

This chapter presents data describing the presence and the role Appalachian icons have in Mountainville's art market. Through a content analysis of paintings, data has established the prevalence and frequency of images in galleries. With the use of free listing during interviews and in surveys, a sense of the dominant stereotypes of Appalachia has also been established. Most importantly, the data reveals the manifestation of stereotyped perception in art images. This relationship between images and stereotypes sets the stage for further discussion on the perceived distinction of Appalachian culture. By locating notions of cultural difference within the body of art and the responses from artists and tourists, this chapter presents a description of what icons perform at the gallery level.

The next chapter expands this perspective by examining how Appalachian icons, developed socio-historically in the mind set of the American mainstream, play out in the tourism industry of Mountainville. Consuming art functions to legitimate social differences. Bourdieu refers to differences between those who can buy and those who cannot. However, in Mountainville, art legitimates the social difference between those who are depicted, painted, and possessed and those who possess and paint. In other words, this art provides a safe "Other"- a hillbilly. Embedded in art this "Other" is kept at a safe distance for artists and tourists. When tourists remark that paintings remind them

of their grandparents' place, they are conveying an undertone of difference in that they do not live like their grandparents anymore. Although tourists may connect to the nostalgic reverence for the past, they still maintain disconnection to that lifestyle. At the heart of this dynamic are the stereotypes that operate in the cultural mind set of tourists and artists. These perceptions, informed by history, continue to dominate. Making connections between economic and political structures of the tourism industry and the content of Mountainville's tourist art is key to understanding the perpetuation of stereotypes.

CHAPTER SIX

ACHIEVING PROPORTION AND SHAPE: THE FUNCTIONS OF CULTURAL ICONS IN LOCAL ECONOMY, LOCAL POLITICS, AND LOCAL CULTURE

Over the years we have had many visitors who come here [to Mountainville], expecting, this is what they're looking for...and they actually, I mean, they're serious, they want to know where the Daisy Dukes...live. -Van Headrick, Mountainville artist

If [Mountainville retailers] focus more on the mountains and less on made-in-Taiwan souvenirs, and they focus more on, "this is how it used to be made, and this is how...our great, great, great, great grandfather did this, and this is a demonstration of how it was made, and this is what they used this for..." It's just more interesting. Like, "when we didn't have electricity, this is what we used for this." People want to know things like that. I think if they keep it up, [Mountainville] could actually be a nice place to visit. -Gertie Dickson, Mountainville artist

[There] was a little gentleman that I used to go over and help hang tobacco. We were going to meet on a Saturday [for me to paint him]. Well, what I really wanted him to do is to hook up the mules, and...have him pulling...a tree, with his mules. Well when I got there, he had his Sunday clothes on, and his little teeny little tie. Well that wasn't what I was looking for. The mountain people saw themselves in a different light than you saw [them]. When I painted [them], their beards, and their wrinkles on their faces, and that little bit of snuff, or tobacco that was in the beard, that was the character that I was looking for. -Van Headrick, Mountainville artist

You have some people who expect to see the hillbilly... If they come to Mountainville just to see the hillbilly, especially nowadays, they're going to be very much disappointed. The hillbilly is not in [Mountainville] and the restaurants are full of foreign speaking waitresses...[Mountainville] has become a melting pot. -Joanna Hitch, Mountainville gallery owner

[It's the] ideas that people have of the area. I've said a lot of times, should we just give them what they're looking for? Should we all wear overalls and gingham shirts, check shirts? Is this what they're looking for? 'cause you go to

Hawaii. What do you expect when you go to Hawaii? A lei, and you expect a girl and a hula skirt and a little, skimpy brassier and the guys with their wrap around thing and a good suntan. That's what we perceive of the islands. And you get that when you go to a luau, because you're paying for it. People just don't dress that way anymore- unless it's for a convention or a performance...Appalachian culture mystifies [people who visit here] as much as [Hawaii] does us. -Gordon Huffstettler, Mountainville Department of Tourism

This chapter presents a discussion on the use of Appalachian cultural icons and stereotypes in the marketing of a place and its art to make both more desirable to tourists. Within much of the tourism literature (Chambers 2000; Graburn 1976; Nash 1989; Phillips and Steiner 1999; Smith 1989), there is great concern for the way tourism homogenizes cultures. That is, as non-Western cultures cater to Western tourists' tastes, they undergo cultural change and sacrifice their cultural uniqueness. This chapter contributes an example of the assertion of cultural uniqueness, and describes icons and the ways they currently function as marketing tools to promote tourism in the town of Mountainville. Why there is a persistent engagement of icons seems to be connected to the function or role that images and their associated meanings serve in the tourism industry. Images bring benefits for people who choose to use them whether in art content or in marketing schemes. Such benefits are not just financial in nature but also personally enriching and emotional. Unraveling the intertwining threads of structural history and individualized choices led me to understand how some images become selected for or are more prevalent than other images in the visualized landscape of Mountainville artists and tourists.

The issue surrounding the use of icons in marketing and in art works is one of the representational qualities of icons. These icons, denoting what is stereotypically

perceived to be Appalachian culture, may be judged to not fully, accurately, and reasonably represent Appalachian region, its residents and its perceived culture, to the degree that accounts for the region's vast variation and complexity of the lived experiences. In many case, icons essentialize and distort notions of Appalachian culture and people. Yet, the meanings assigned or decoded in these icons are considered authentic by consumers' (artists and tourists). The icons carry sincere and genuine expressions of consumers' personal identities and cultural mindsets. This tension between representation and expression pertains to the conundrum of authenticity introduced in Chapter Two and becomes even more apparent in Chapter Seven and Eight as artists find ways to achieve a sense of life's fulfillment while coping with the struggles to make a living. This present chapter explores the multiple levels of meanings expressed through the cultural and personal use of Appalachian icons.

With a list provided by the content analysis of the most common icons present in Mountainville's art market, I was prepared to make connections between the social and historical canon of stereotypical Appalachian images as presented to the public in print, visual, and performed media and the use of such iconic images by individuals in the local tourist market. From this comparison, I discerned three functions that icons serve in Mountainville. First, icons contribute to the projection of cultural difference. Secondly, icons help to shape the tourist's experiences. Thirdly, icons enable the sale of art pieces through engagement.

In order to explore these functions, I frame them within certain moments of the tourist experience/encounter with Mountainville as a tourist destination. The first function I discerned, projecting Mountainville as a destination of cultural difference,

correlates with the moments before and leading to a tourist's visit. I suggest in these moments of planning a vacation and reading brochures that previously acquired knowledge and beliefs about Appalachia are drawn upon in deciding to vacation in Mountainville. Such knowledge and beliefs are based on the public media's representation of Appalachia. Icons present in Mountainville tourism brochures correspond to the believability of stereotypes of Appalachia and help to make Mountainville seem culturally different enough for a getaway vacation.

The second function of icons I discerned is framed in the moments during which tourists come to and spend time in Mountainville. These "moments" are constituted by encounters tourists have with the built environment of Mountainville as well as encounters tourists have with people working in Mountainville's tourist industry. I suggest that icons help to fulfill the expectations of what tourists hope to experience. This fulfillment comes about because of the contrived nature of the tourism industry and its focus on meeting demands placed by tourists.

The third function, engaging art, is framed in the moments when tourists are looking to possess some item/commodity that symbolizes the vacation destination they have experienced. Although class position has influence on an art buyer's preferences and certainly his/her vacation experiences, the buyer's emotional attachment to images transcends class lines. When viewers connect to a piece of art, emotions are triggered and serve as a catalyst to the sale of many paintings.

Media Formats Projecting a Sense of Cultural Difference of Appalachia

The goal of this discussion is to describe the first of three functions, the projection of cultural difference which I observed icons to serve. To understand how the

Appalachian region is construed as culturally distinct, this section examines the ways Appalachia has been talked about, written about, and visualized in public media. Thus, an intellectual history of Appalachian images is reviewed. Establishing a historical pattern of cultural distinction sets the stage for understanding how the perceptions of Mountainville tourists towards Appalachian culture are formed.

Images of Appalachia suggesting cultural difference have been projected to Americans since the 1800s. This history of characterizing Appalachia provides a basis for what people now associate with the Appalachian people, culture, and place. Icons, as connotations of associations and meanings, emerge from this history of representation. Icons used to think and to talk about Appalachia suggest structural forces at work in shaping perceptions of Appalachia- that is, the perceptions carried by one generation are passed on to the next generation with slight alterations. The discourse of icons of Appalachia says more about the cultural norms and values of the American populace than they do about the cultural nature of Appalachia. In early 1800s United States history, when much of the continent remained uninhabited and unexplored, the frontier signified difficult survival and self reliance to those who lived in more populated areas. Tales of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett seemed to affirm notions of the wild mountainous areas as places of danger, yet tamable by people who were perceived to have the right amount of wits, stamina, personal and moral honor, and resistance to authority figures (Brosi 2006).

In the 1880s when much of the U.S. was experiencing post-Civil War economic growth, reports and images of violence and family feuds in the mountains of Kentucky and West Virginia were presented in the national press and interpreted as signs of

lawlessness and ignorant mountain folk. These interpretations, however, ignored the emerging political and economic struggles as the coal and timber lands of the Appalachian Mountains became highly attractive to northern capitalists and state developers. With such outside interests in the region's economic resources and in local political control, the images signifying lawlessness and ignorance reflect more the country's intolerant attitude towards disorder, isolation, and non-progress. As Waller suggests, reading about the stories of Appalachian family feuds and seeing the images allowed the American middle class "to distance themselves from the potential for family violence" (Waller 1995). Moreover, the violent icons of Appalachia legitimized the presence of regional outsiders in local politics and in resource extraction (Billings and Blee 2000; Blee and Billings 1999; Shapiro 1978; Waller 1988; 1995). For example, the Tug Valley was opened for entrepreneurs interested in developing the coal industry.

From the images of violence of the late 1800s and early 1900s, representations of Appalachian culture in the 1910s to 1940s centered on movie and comic strip characters that exuded childlike qualities, irresponsibility, and obliviousness. L'il Abner and Snuffy Smith both entered the public domain in 1934 and represented the economic instability of the Great Depression. The American economic breakdown of the 1930s produced fear in the urban majority of falling back into a rural and impoverished subsistence. The images projected in cartoons, comic books, movies, and literature of men and women in worn and ill-fitting clothing with bare feet, lazy posturing, black and scrubby beards for the men, living in shabby shacks, and carrying shot guns embodied this fear and served as a public warning of the economic possibilities of Americans losing access to wealth and resources (Williamson 1995). These images of white-only characters also conveyed

notions of race as an influx of Eastern European and Asian immigrant labor in the northern industrial belt led the middle and upper classes to regard the white Anglo-Saxton ancestry of many Appalachian people to be the purest form of Americans (Silber 2001). In the U.S. context of racialized thinking and racial unrest, images of Appalachians as white were comforting and proved advantageous to those trying to develop lines of financial support connecting poor Appalachians and the wealthier northern upper classes¹¹. Such images reflected cultural beliefs and attitudes that valued economic order and stability, patriotism, and racial purity.

Cultural beliefs and attitudes towards poverty in Appalachia are influenced by the War on Poverty campaigns of the 1960s. After World War II, many Americans again experienced an economic boom. Not all regions of the country enjoyed financial growth, however, and parts of Appalachia especially experienced a lack of growth or different rates of growth. Poor living conditions, few opportunities for enhancement and empowerment, and little control of local resources were remnants of the exploitive relationships created by outside capitalists and local elites. In 1964, as an attempt to improve domestic economic policy, President Lyndon Johnson initiated War on Poverty programs from the porch of a coal miner's home in Martin County, Kentucky (Howley 2006). These programs, consisting mostly of educational, technical, and financial assistance, were benevolent in their intent, but affected the kinds of images of Appalachia that rested in the minds of the American populace. Television, newspaper, and magazine

¹¹William Goodwell Frost applied the phrase "our contemporary ancestors" in an 1899 article published in Atlantic Monthly. As President of Berea College, Frost aimed to build financial support for the college as well as recruit white students. His representation of southern mountaineers as pure American stock appealed to a national context of immigrant flow and racial turmoil and resulted in the widely accepted yet inaccurate perception that Appalachia was homogeneously white (Frost 1899).

images of people in extreme poverty and middle class volunteers ready to rally and fight for improved conditions depicted Appalachian people as victims of exploitative relations and as people in a culture of poverty spiraling into squander. Furthermore, movies about this era represented Appalachian people as “helpless victims of greed” (Williamson 1995:252) in need of saving by more virtuous citizens from the modernized and urbanized upper classes in the more economically successful northern states.

Representations of victimization however did not lead to perceptions of Appalachian people as innocent for their economic hardships. Victims turned failures as many Americans continued to believe in the myth of meritocratic individualism fairly rewarded by capitalism. Such perceptions led to stereotypes of Appalachian people as poor, lazy, and backwards by their own fault. Thinking about Appalachian people with these stereotypes dangerously ignored the roots of such poverty and disguised the power structures and ideology that resulted in absent access to resources, to control, and to opportunity (Billings 1999; Eller 1999; Fisher 1993; Gaventa 1980).

The War on Poverty left associations of Appalachia as a region of poor, backward, and ill-equipped folk branded on the minds of Americans. Throughout the late 1960s and 1970s media images of people from Appalachia projected them as caricatures accentuating naiveté, light hearted folly, and obliviousness as depicted by the TV show *The Beverly Hillbillies*. Such caricatures continued to project the region’s population as backward and ill-equipped to survive in the world, yet the Clampetts had wealth. Through this dynamic these TV icons mirrored cultural norms and values by challenging acceptable behavior. That the Clampetts possessed great wealth yet failed to understand money and were not greedy teaches audiences that pure and truthful character however

naive triumphs over less desirable human qualities of selfishness and materialism (Williamson 1995:56). In 1972 the far reaching movie *Deliverance* projected a very different image of hillbilly as menacing and violent. This Appalachian icon molded from the “local” characters in the movie, represented a repulsion of backwardness in a society coveting urban sophistication and technical advancement. Additionally, the urban icons in the movie stood for masculinity and heroism overcoming the wild violence of nature represented by the local and rural characters. Audiences reacted to this film because it tapped into the American culture’s fear of nature resisting control by man which reinforced cultural values of progress in the form of urbanization and masculinity (Williamson 1995:157-163).

As Americans coped with the social restructuring of the 1960s, media images depicting southern and mountain culture during the late 1970s and 1980s reflected the nation’s sense of nostalgia. The Foxfire series of books, started as a school project in northern Georgia, attempted to capture the traditional folklore and folkways of local people. The books and magazine become top sellers because of Americans’ desire to reconnect to the past and to shift their modern lifestyles to more personalized, simple, and earthy lifestyles (Smith 2006). The television show *The Waltons* proved to be popular with American audiences because of its portrayal of a strong, loving family with a keen sense of place and tradition that survives economic and personal hardships through hard work and virtuous character. Set in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, this television show in its nine year run romanticized people from Appalachia by projecting images of rural life, poverty, strong connections to kin, self-reliance, and sincere compassion for the needs of others to its viewing audiences (Harkins 2006; Holmes 2006). These nostalgic

images, transformed by television, became emblematic of perceived Appalachian values for family and place. Other television and media icons like *The Dukes of Hazzard* and country music star Dolly Parton echoed an American middle class sense of nostalgia for the past and for characters, however humorous and exaggerated, who maintained strong connections to family and to place.

The 1990s media and entertainment industry continued the projection of Appalachian images in nostalgic ways, although with the additional sense of appreciation for regional culture. *Christy*, a novel, musical, television movie, and most widely seen as a 1994-1995 television series, presents images of Appalachian people cemented in the past. Pioneer-esque landscapes and material culture form the body of stage and set props. The basic plot revolves around the encounters of an upper class young woman turned teacher as she interacts with and tries to understand a mountain community distrusting of outsiders (Hasorouck 2006). The 2001 movie *Songcatcher* features ballad collecting in the Mountain South and acknowledges the cultural exploitation that Appalachia has endured (Haskell 2006: 1743). Placing such importance on understanding the experience of people of a place pronounced by both the TV show and the film appealed to an audience interested in regional culture. This same interest and appreciation for regional culture was echoed by the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival held at the National Mall in Washington, D.C. which highlighted Appalachian music. That same year, the movie *Cold Mountain* debuted portraying a wounded Civil War veteran returning to his romanticized mountain home where he believes he will be made whole again. Meanwhile his lover is transformed from upper class aristocracy to a self-sufficient farmer with the help of a local mountain woman (Powell 2006). Each of these recent media displays of Appalachia

say more about the cultural attitudes and interests of the American populace towards appreciating regional distinctions than about the cultural nature of Appalachia (Brosi 2006).

The primary concern for this discussion on the chronology of the projections of Appalachian cultural images is to illustrate how stereotypes of Appalachia are embedded and enculturated in Americans through popular media. Chronicling popular media's treatment of Appalachian culture sets the stage for the kinds of images and their associated meanings that are used now by Mountainville's tourist industry.

Although these recent images of Appalachian culture, the aforementioned movies along with bestselling novels like *Gap Creek* (Morgan 2000) maintain some sense of nostalgia for the perceived historicalness of Appalachia, they do not overtly stigmatize Appalachian people as cultural fools or monsters. This is not to say that individuals have stopped referring to stereotypes of Appalachia as a place of deep poverty, inbreeding, and backwards thinking. In fact, most recently two instances have occurred where a politician of a northern Appalachian state and a biologist have referred to abusive stereotypes of Appalachia in discussing, respectively, the state's economic status and the breeding patterns of Amazonia piranhas¹². It does, however, suggest that in a national climate of vast mobility and quick communication, Americans are more skeptical and critical of overarching stereotypes. Still, Americans hold an appeal for perceivably distinctive

¹²New York Governor Elliott Spitzer commented that the economies of counties in Upstate New York were like Appalachia. Just a few months later, the *New Yorker Magazine* published an article in which Peter Gordon described the breeding patterns of piranhas as not like Appalachian inbreeding, but much more selective in their reproductive choices. Both incidents received a backlash of comments from politicians in the first case who wanted to separate their Upstate constituency from Appalachian economic stigmas and from academics in the second case who wanted their fellow scientist to not rely on popular cultural stereotypes when describing biological patterns.

regional traits and whatever cultural nuances are marketed. The tourism industry contributes to this regional appreciation. Because so many American travelers chose domestic travel destinations in the wake of 9/11 (Fieldnotes), more attention has been paid to regionalism throughout the U.S. Finding places of cultural difference satisfies the tourist's desire to experience some degree of exoticism. At the hand of domestic tourism developers, regionalism is promoted as each local destination tries to make itself more attractive and more distinctive in the tourist market.

Images in Mountainville Projecting a Sense of Cultural Difference

This discussion now moves away from a regional perspective of Appalachian media images to examine the use of images on the local level. Images are used to propagandize Mountainville as the "Appalachia" tourists might already believe in (Moulin 1987). This research found that the projected images of Mountainville resonate with the social historical images of Appalachia and draw upon images and meanings that cross-cut history. In looking at the whole picture of this tourism market, it became very clear to me how this local community was presented to the public in travel brochures, television commercials, website advertisements, and travel magazines. In its description, Mountainville is projected as a place of difference. The emphasis as a place of uniqueness is purposeful because Mountainville's natural and cultural environments have to be different enough from a tourist's regular environment to warrant an investment of time, money, energy, and interest to travel to and vacate in this spot. Three examples of images used to promote tourism assert this point: mountains, bears, and hillbillies.

Mountains

Like early 1800s images of a wild frontier, images of undeveloped mountain scenes dominant current iconography of Mountainville. Many of these images are possible because of the creation of a national park adjacent to the town. Not only does a national park protect the landscape from development, it symbolizes nature. In an American cultural world view, nature is defined as opposite to civilization. Nature is perceived as innocent, untouched, and pure where civilization is technicalized, commercialized, and pushy¹³. What most people who visit the national park and Mountainville do not realize is that it is civilization that has created this natural scene. By the efforts and decisions of men and women and by children contributing their pennies, the national park was created in the 1930s to reclaim what had actually been important timber lands. Thus the landscape surrounding Mountainville is not natural in that it exists without the influence of people. Indeed, the landscape is a result of thousands of people planning, implementing, fund raising, policy making, displacing local populations, and constantly monitoring and managing to create what American culture perceives as an intact, original, and independent natural wilderness.

During my fieldwork, Mountainville city government, with land owners and business owners, passed an ordinance to place underground all the electric and telephone wires hanging from utility poles in downtown Mountainville. Met with some opposition, the rationale for this expense was to minimize obstructions from any views of the

¹³ This cultural dichotomy of nature and civilization comes from the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), a French Romantic who found evils in civilization and its domination over nature (Rousseau 2006). For an ethnographic example of this nature and civilization relationship in the creation of a national park, see Richard Reed's Forest Dwellers, Forest Protectors: Indigenous Models for International Development published by Allyn and Bacon. Boston (1997).

surrounding mountains from the downtown street area so that the resulting and more pleasing aesthetic would enhance the tourist's experience. This government act demonstrates the prominence of mountain images is the self-characterization of Mountainville and made into policy the town's association with the nearby natural geographic features.

The architecture aesthetic as reported by one of Mountainville's most prolific architects also reflects the surrounding geology. Although there is a variety of architectural styles and, in some cases an absence of recognizable styles creating a hodgepodge look, many buildings downtown characterize mountain slopes with their steep roof lines and natural looking materials including synthetic wood log facades and cedar shingles. City guidelines, not requirements, for architectural designs identify what the architectural and planning committee believes are important components of mountain architecture: rustic style, natural materials, and an appropriate relationship between site and building. When designing for large public buildings including hotels and a convention center, clients are encouraged to consider a cascading look to their buildings. A cascading building is "larger toward the center of the property and stepping down around the perimeters" (Interview TT). This aesthetic mimics the mountains or small multiple waterfalls in a mountain stream. Although not every client decides to follow this style, there are several newer and central buildings in Mountainville that do "cascade" and reflect the city's surroundings.

Despite the manmade basis to the natural landscape and the management of landscape views, images of undeveloped mountains as far as the eye can see and architectural styles reflecting the mountains symbolize and project the predominance of

nature in this local community. Such a perceived presence of nature helps to construct difference between this vacation destination and the tourist's home.

Black Bear

Images of the black bear are a second example of icons used to promote Mountainville as a place of difference. Indeed, one artist remarked that, "the black bear...is a symbol, not of Appalachia, but of [Mountainville]," (Interview VH). Many local attractions and businesses use images of the black bear as an advertising icon. The black bear symbolizes nature and the wilderness just like images of mountainscapes. This icon is additionally and often imbued with personifying features and exhibits personality traits and human behaviors which visitors may relate to.

In many cases where the black bear icon is used, a certain quality of experience to be expected is communicated to the tourist. For example, one particular restaurant uses a cartooned image of a black bear wearing a red gingham bib and red brimmed hat holding an upright fork in one paw and an upright knife in the other. Three elements of this icon, the bib, the upright flatware, and a worn hat, indicate that the restaurant offers a culinary experience that is relaxed, informal, and perhaps inexpensive. Moreover, the icon suggests that this restaurant is for people who are as hungry as one might perceive a wild bear to be- a message confirmed by the restaurant's description.

Another example of the use of the black bear icon is by a cabin rental company who suggests the rustic yet comfortable character of its accommodations by projecting a cartoon image of a bear cub lying on a log surrounded by flowers and a butterfly. The lying cub mesmerized by the fluttering butterfly indicates tranquility believed to be found

in nature. Thus two qualities of experience, nature and peacefulness, are conveyed to the tourist.

The official spokesperson and mascot of Mountainville is a person in a black bear suit. Of course, the human actor is invisible to the audience. What is performed is an icon of a black bear endowed with human traits. There is humor to note that in a television commercial, this wild and truly dangerous animal re-embodied as a spokesperson loves to shop, sleeps in an overnight cabin rental with his teddy bear, and loves candy canes. The black bear part of the icon reinforces the notion that wild animals are prevalent and that one may experience contact with them. The suggestion of such contact reinforces perceptions of differences between Mountainville where the black bear is honored and protected and where humans are penalized for mistreatment of the bear and those places like the tourist's home, where wild animals are often removed from human habitation. The human qualities of the icon suggest the kinds of behavior and attitudes that a tourist should have.

Hillbillies

The third kind of images promoting a sense of difference includes those that engage with perceptions of mountain culture. Because the social history of Appalachian images has constructed an association of Appalachian culture as primitive, backwards, and full of folly, much of the images of mountain culture displayed in Mountainville resonate hillbilly-esque. The hillbilly icon functions in American society to delineate boundaries of normal behavior and thought. In Mountainville, the prevalence of hillbilly icons functions to accentuate the perceived cultural difference between the guest and the host- a sense of cultural difference built upon and developed from a sense of cultural

abnormality. Even though Mountainville's town history is rooted in subsistence farming and a pioneer lifestyle, Mountainvillians have not been economically based agrarians since the mid-1930s. Tourism has been the preeminent industry since the opening of the national park in 1934 and the subsequent paving of highways into the park and through the city. These elements, the park, the roads, and the U.S.'s expanding car culture oriented Mountainville's local economics, politics, and attitudes towards commercialism, a service industry, and an urban infrastructure- a far cry from the pioneer agrarians that icons throughout the town embody.

With a product that objectified nature and scenic beauty, Mountainville tourism promoters became marketers. An advertising campaign launched in 1950 sent a motorcade traveling to Florida carrying men and women in costume.

Fifteen cars, decorated with bumper stickers and banners, followed their highway patrol escort to and through Florida, and back. Big black hats, red plaid shirts and jeans outfitted the men; and homespun skirts and bonnets, the ladies. The whole affair bespoke "mountain hospitality" and "cool mountain air" to the sweltering natives of the deep South. (Trout 1984:117).

This initial advertising event for Mountainville set the tone for the projection of mountain culture that juxtaposed residents from their increasingly urban lives.

Throughout its tourism history, Mountainville has sported images of hillbilly mountain culture in many of its attractions. Restaurants boost log cabin themes. An art community promotes on-site, handmade items of utility connecting to perceived cultural traits of self-sufficiently, ingenuity, and simplicity.

Other attractions on the main street include two miniature golf courses, one with a pioneer theme and the other with a Davy Crockett theme, a shooting range with an

outhouse and potbellied stove as targets, a souvenir and gifts store selling “hillbilly artifacts,” a watermill in an upscale restaurant’s front, a white clapboard church which serves as a wedding chapel, and two separate buildings with facades like colonial forts (Fieldnotes). It is my interpretation that these images remind the tourist of the exaggerated versions of Appalachian culture without identifying them as exaggerated. Indeed, these icons work together to create a place that is different than the visitor’s home because of the density of such images and because of the cultural associations these images may lead the viewer to make. Anecdotally, I was told many times that people visited Mountainville because of the attractions in the town.

As the economy of Mountainville grew, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, the range of vacation costs widened with the additional offering of cheaper accommodations and travel expense to the more expensive, luxury stays. This range of costs enabled tourists of more limited means and a class-based preference for vacation activities and merchandise to visit Mountainville. The types of businesses in Mountainville also expanded and yielded more to those products that offered higher margins of profit but were still affordable and preferred by this newer clientele -the T-shirts, the knives, the tattoos (Fieldnotes). As more of the blue collar class came to Mountainville, these businesses became more successful, and retail rents began to soar.

When the volume of working class tourists increased, the volume of upper class visitors decreased- primarily because the new working class tourist product was not preferred by upper class clientele (Interview MM; Interview VS; Stryder 1998). Thus, there was a shift in the class-base of tourists visiting this Appalachian mountain town. This resulted in more people, a growing economy, and cheaper products. Working-class-

based preferences dictated the kinds of businesses, merchandise, and activities that impacted the tourist experience.

Because of the seasonal nature of tourism, many businesses could not attain the profits needed to pay the consistently high retail rents during the winter and spring (Interview GH; Fieldnotes). Many of these businesses failed, and the retail spaces they occupied go vacant as the land owners wait for a new tenant. During my eighteen months of fieldwork, two sizable restaurant buildings and the land parcel of a former kiddies' amusement park in downtown Mountainville stayed vacant. At least twenty retail spaces either changed hands or become unoccupied (Fieldnotes). Meanwhile, many of these buildings are not code compliant, and without a tenant, land owners are hesitant to invest in improvements (Interview RM).

Many of these spaces, as well as the changing class-base of the tourist experience, were cause for visitor complaints and expressed disappointments about what Mountainville had become (Fieldnotes; Stryder 1998). The most common complaint targeted what tourists I spoke with saw as the replacement of the quaintness of Mountainville with commercialization (Fieldnotes). I witnessed such complaints in galleries when visitors expressed their disappointment of the way downtown Mountainville changed since their last visit (Fieldnotes).

Many community members believed that such disappointment might lead to a decline in visitor numbers. As a preventative act to this threat to the tourist economy, the city hire a tourism development consulting firm to evaluate assets and liabilities and to make recommendations to improve Mountainville's tourism industry (Stryder 1998). The resulting report acknowledged the strength of the city government and the business

community, and the near absence of civic participation in addressing issues of community life. Based on this report's recommendation for a stronger civic organization, the Mountainville Foundation was formed in 1999 (Foundation website).

According to its statement of purpose, the Mountainville Foundation is a proactive community organization, devoted to environmental sensitivity, cultural enrichment, and economic prosperity. This organization aimed to change the consciousness of the community and shift ways of thinking about Mountainville's tourism product. City government officials, business owners, land owners, and residents were recruited to various meetings and conferences to develop a more reflective and deliberate approach to controlling Mountainville's tourism industry.

The organization intended to develop a model of tourism that stabilized economic risk and "protected their golden goose" (Interview GW; Interview SB) by promoting the history and legends of Mountainville and preserving the natural landscape of the mountains. Of particular concern were those tourist attractions, such as Ninja knife shops and tattoo parlors, that did not fit within the overall theme of "mountain" tourism and which some Foundation members personally disliked (Fieldnotes). They sought to influence the community's tourism industry to replace the impersonal over-consumerism displayed by the dozens of T-shirt and knick-knack souvenir shops with sustainable tourism- a type of tourism that is concerned with the environment and natural resources (Mowforth and Munt 1998) and maintaining their quality for future generations (Fritsch and Johannsen 2004).

Most models of sustainable tourism press for regulated economic growth, visitor management, and environmental assessment in order to minimize tourism's affect on the

overall local nature and culture (Mowforth and Munt 1998:116). Concerned mostly with Mountainville's tourist product, sustainable tourism was believed by the Foundation, whose meetings I attended, to not only enhance and personalize the tourist's experience but also to protect the community from damaging over-development (Interview DW; Interview GW; Interview SB; Fieldnotes). Businesses such as knife and sword shops, vulgar T-shirt shops, and tattoo parlors as well as time-share property hawkers and vacant, dilapidated retail spaces were believed by the Foundation to signify to visitors and to residents over-development and over-commercialism. Moreover, Foundation members considered these visual landscapes to display tastes that tourist might perceive as unattractive (Fieldnotes).

The Mountainville Foundation, despite its grassroots organization and its principles of heritage tourism and eco-tourism, had difficulty convincing the long-time residents and land owners to participate in their vision of sustainable tourism (Fieldnotes). The grassroots leaders perceived the land owners' and business people's resistance to change to come from the huge financial success they received from the kinds of businesses, like T-shirt shops, they were running. The land owners were perceived by some Foundation members to be content with whoever could pay the exorbitant and ever rising rents (Stryder 1998; Fieldnotes). Based on my interviews with and my fieldnotes of conversations with the business community in downtown locations, business owners needed to conduct businesses with high profit margins, again the T-shirt shops, so they could accommodate the high rents required by the property owners (Interview CO; Interview RM; Fieldnotes). This form of financial greed disables a quality experience and promotes a very competitive, aggressive, and overly commercial

tourism market- a market that ever needs to expand while minimizing costs. The end result is an uncontrolled market that serves a select few land-owners and leaves the tourist dissatisfied.

This was not the first attempt to control tourism in Mountainville. In the mid-1950s street clutter caused by inconsistent and zealous signage brought complaints by residents and visitors of the commercialization of Mountainville. The early 1970s brought government action as the mayor and other leaders sponsored a professional report of recommendations to control tourism and enhance the community (Trout 1984).

This most recent attempt at affecting tourism resulted in a plan to introduce varying forms of educational entertainment to the summer and fall tourist seasons (Fieldnotes; Interview GW; Mountainville Department of Tourism brochures; Stryder 1998). Seeking to incorporate the town's history, several actors, musicians, and storytellers were hired to recount local lore to passersby (Fieldnotes; Interview GW; Interview SB). Put into place for the summer 2006 and fall 2006 seasons, the plan was well received by tourists who would crowd around the street performers and learn about Mountainville's heroes and legends (Fieldnotes). This form of cultural heritage did not interfere with the kinds of businesses that steadily brought in large profits, and it satisfied to some level the Mountainville Foundation's goals of offering a higher quality experience/ product to visitors.

This anecdote illustrates a shift towards more reflective heritage tourism in Mountainville which in turn, reflects trends in global tourism for vacations that allow tourists to get to know a place and its residents (Abram, Waldren, and Macleod 1997; Chambers 2000; Ethnohistory 2003; Mowforth and Munt 1998; Smith 1989; Wallace

2005). The same critiques of exaggerating cultural traits, promoting stereotypes, and objectifying and commodifying culture can, however, be made of heritage tourism. In the performed recounting of local Mountainville lore, images of men and women with ill fitting and worn clothing reflect the hillbilly icons of the 1930s (Fieldnotes). A stereotypical Daniel Boone costume dons advertisements of these performances. The well-intentioned approach to cultivating these tourist attractions is based on the structural and social historical associations that even people within the region make of Appalachia. One promoter of the local lore performances reports a personal connection in that “My [spouse] is one of them [Appalachian]. There’s a substance to them that is fascinating” (Interview GW). Moreover, “I’d like to see the people that live here celebrate their heritage for the sake of celebrating what needs to be acknowledged. And the tourist, that’s why they’ll come” (Interview GW).

Another of the Mountainville Foundation members believes that, “This is our home. If we create a home that is warm and lovely and gracious and welcoming, and a really nice place to be, where *we* like to be, then people will like to come here” (Interview SB, emphasis by the speaker). This comparable perspective between “we” and “they” recalls the hospitality associated with hometowns as well as the perceived friendliness of mountain communities. It also connects to the comfort and security that tourists seek when they travel (Interview GH; Interview WY; Fieldnotes). Although this perspective does not articulate the constructed difference within tourist destinations, it does connect to the personal-ness that many tourists lack in their daily lives and places and that which they seek when they vacate away from those daily places.

Mountainville's department of tourism also markets the town as a place for families. Icons of middle class white nuclear family with mother, father, son, and daughter with "ooooed and awed" expressions on their faces are projected to potential tourists. These images are complete with smiles and souvenir bags in hand. The literature accompanying images of this place in travel brochures promise "family fun," "attractions for the whole family" and a range of activities to suit any tastes. Moreover, this tourist site is marketed as a safe place that will entertain families year after year. Not only do these marketing images encourage tourists to bring their children, subsequently spending more money, these images offer something different in their orientation towards the family from the tourist's everyday landscape.

These cases show how Mountainville is and has been marketed as a place of difference in order to attract tourists. Seeking to capitalize on its gateway position at the entrance to a national park, Mountainville tourism deploys images that connote to mountain vistas, wildlife, and human habitats preserved by the park. In doing so, Mountainville tourism reproduces representations of Appalachian culture found in national public media. As the discussion of the first function of icons has shown, a history of media images pronounces the Appalachian region to be cultural different from mainstream America. Tourists' perceptions of Appalachia are most likely informed by national public media. Marketing with similar images connects to these pre-formed ideas and effectively attracts tourists.

Projecting an Experience of Cultural Difference through Icons

Not only are tourists lured by the marketing of this place as culturally and ecologically different, their expectations as to what they will experience are shaped by

the images and meanings projected to them (Svasek 2007). Once tourists arrive in Mountainville, icons guide them through this cultural space delivering information about attractions which tourists then use to plan their itineraries. Hence, icons serve a second function- to influence experience. Icons, however, do not influence experiences of tourists in the same way or to the same extent. Reception of meanings associated with icons has much to do with the personal identities, backgrounds, and tastes of individual tourists. This discussion of the second function of icons, to influence the experiences of tourists, is more interpretive. I documented icons present in the Mountainville landscape systematically even though businesses often change their store fronts to remain fresh and new (Fieldnotes). In addition to surveys I conducted with gallery visitors, I rely on fieldnotes of conversations and observations to substantiate my findings here.

Walking up and down the street in Mountainville, I documented icons used by businesses. I was curious about the messages that tourists might receive while they moved along the sidewalk and looked at window and entrance displays. Displays are a key element in engaging the tourist. They are used to attract the attention of a patron as well as inform the patron about the contents of the shop, atmosphere of the restaurant and hotel, or activity of the attraction. Many proprietors spend a great deal of effort planning, changing, and setting up displays. Very often displays will coordinate with the seasons and upcoming holidays. Per my research focus on Appalachian icons, I logged the displays of fifty-nine businesses into seventy-eight observations of icons¹⁴. These businesses were located within the densest one-mile section of Mountainville's three-mile downtown. Seventy-one percent (or 42 in number) of the fifty-nine business displays

¹⁴One or two displays contained multiple icons and accounts for the difference in actual number of businesses and number of observations.

contained references to some kind of cultural associations. Although mostly of Appalachian or mountain culture, like the watermill located on the front lawn of a popular restaurant and the black bear benches at the entrance to a national hotel chain, examples of these displays also included images of crayfish (referencing Louisiana Cajun) and the Confederate flag (referencing the Old Confederate South). Almost 29 percent (or 17 in number) did not contain images of distinct cultural references. These included toy stores, an aquarium, sports bars, candle stores, and haunted house adventures whose displays and signage only consisted of the business's name and no visualizations. Of the observations of cultural icons, there were three observations of European architecture including Bavarian and Victorian styled facades. Although these facades do not adhere to themes of mountain culture, they do contribute a sense of charm and quaintness and certainly a degree of uniqueness to downtown Mountainville (Fieldnotes). Therefore, 95 percent (or 58 in number) of the sixty-one observed business displays presented iconic images of Appalachian culture to passers-by.

Table 6.7 Icons Observed in Downtown Mountainville

Number of Businesses Observed	Percent	Number of Icon Types Observed	Percent
42 with icons =	71%	22 references to Pioneer Culture	36%
17 businesses with no icons =	29%	15 references to nature	25%
59 Total businesses observed =	100%	8 references to nearby mountains	13%
		7 references to the past/ nostalgia	11%
		3 references to Southern Culture	5%
		3 references to Europe	5%
		3 references to Cherokee Culture	5%
		61 Total icons observed =	100%

The high percentage of Appalachian icons used to draw tourists speaks to the cultural difference promoted by retail, restaurant, hotel, and attraction venues. Moreover, I suggest that these icons support the pre-conceived associations tourists are led to make about the cultural identity of Mountainville. For example, a Mountainville vacation guide produced by the Mountainville Department of Tourism contains several advertisements that convey what the tourist might expect to experience. The first few pages of the guide are filled with photographs of the possible activities one might participate in while on vacation in Mountainville, including hiking, fishing, biking, shopping, miniature golf, river rafting, golfing, listening to fiddle music, camp fires, horseback riding, skiing, eating, and getting married. Such a list may not be different from other vacation destinations, aside from the cultural context in which a tourist might expect to experience them. Headings above the photographs read “Family,...Tradition,...Good Times,...A Wilderness Experience” and convey subtle messages about the kind of vacation a tourist is sure to have if he/she comes to Mountainville.

In an advertisement for a restaurant specializing in pancakes, the tourist is promised “authentic mountain atmosphere and authentic mountain country cooking from friendly, efficient personnel.” This description of the experience not only assures a mountain experience, but also an experience with the stereotype that people of the mountains are friendly. Another restaurant invites tourists to “come dine in a...mountain lodge” where moonshine chicken is listed on the menu. This advertisement not only helps to define for the tourist what a mountain lodge looks like, it also suggests a connotation of the cultural stereotype that people from Appalachia readily use moonshine. Brochures like this one, and other promotional media, barrage tourists with images and connotations

so that when tourists eat breakfast at the “Mountain Cabin Pancake House,” shop for souvenirs at “Bearskins Mall,” and play miniature golf at Davy Crockett’s, whatever expectations they may have to encounter pioneer/hillbilly culture, albeit artificially, may be fulfilled.

Additionally, when a visitor walks the streets of downtown Mountainville, he/she is likely to encounter buildings with log, wood shingle, and stone and wood facades, landscaping that includes water mills, a white clapboard chapel, board walks, outhouses, forts, and mine entrances, retail window displays of quilts, copper kettles, potbelly stoves, and names of businesses that include words like God's country, peddler, trading post, and hillbilly. Each of these images of material culture present to the observer messages that Mountainville possesses a pioneer mountain culture. Associations with wildlife and the natural environment are also presented to passers-by through signage and displays that contain references to trees, actual mountain names, and eleven statues of black bears within a one mile stretch. A connection to the past is strongly indicated by business names that contain and repeat words like memories, old time, nostalgia, and history. The advantage of these observations is to see the insertion of cultural icons into the tourist’s experience of Mountainville’s physical scene, and then to recognize the subsequent cultural associations made of the people who live and work in Mountainville.

In order to understand the cultural stereotypes tourists associate with Appalachia, survey data was collected from gallery visitors after they exited art galleries located throughout Mountainville. The survey asked participants to list what they associate or know about people living in Appalachia. Responses were varied and coded using the same categories as the content analysis of gallery paintings as well as the free lists of

stereotypes provided by interview participants. Table 6.2 below provides the rank order by frequency of those connotations of Appalachian culture given by all survey responders with some examples to illustrate responses.

Table 6.8 Associations with Appalachia Made by Gallery Visitors

RANK	CODED CATEGORIES OF LISTED ASSOCIATIONS	EXAMPLES OF LISTED RESPONSES OF ASSOCIATIONS
1	Personality Traits	friendly, old time values, hardworking, honest, loyal, proud, sincere, helpful
2	Crafts/ Artistic	creative, artisans, craftsmen, folk art, musicians, crafty, homemade, resourceful, storytellers
3	Poverty and Under-education	lower income, hard life, poor, uneducated, not well educated
4	Environmental Landscape	live in the mountains, nature, mountain people, gardens, log homes, live off land
5	Slower Pace & Isolated	laid back lifestyle, rustic, simple, relaxed, rural, reclusive, country living, shut off from urban life
6	Know Nothing of Appalachia	
7	Heritage/Tradition	old community, long and rich heritage, values tradition, Old English, religious, Christian

The ranked data indicates that stereotypes of Appalachia as expressed by tourists are associated with characteristics of people in Appalachia- notably that Appalachians are friendly, neighborly, hardworking people owning conservative and Christian values. Expressed stereotypes associate people in Appalachia with craftsmanship and artistry. Both of these qualities signify the context of the survey, that being galleries in Mountainville's arts and crafts community.

The ranked responses also suggest that recent experiences with artists and craftspeople who intentionally act friendly towards their gallery visitors influenced

survey responses. This is not to suggest that people are rude elsewhere. Moreover, such experiences should not be viewed as tainting the data but rather indicate the purposeful establishment of a particular kind of tourist experience. Chapters Seven and Eight go into further detail about the performative qualities of artists and gallery workers and their assumed friendly nature.

The tourist's experience is still couched in modern conveniences however much historical pioneer mountain cultural icons are used to shape it. Generally when tourists choose their vacation accommodations in Mountainville, they expect comfort combined with traditional housing. A chance to stay in a log cabin provides a unique experience for many visitors, but especially those who come from urban areas (Fieldnotes). Thus, the vernacular architecture is widely that of the log cabin; but because of the demand for comfort the majority of log cabin rentals have a Jacuzzi and cable television.

Tourists also expect enrichment from their travel experiences. Enrichment can come from relaxation, family activities, or engagement with the perceived exoticism of local traditions and people. Visiting historic homesteads preserved by the national park reinforces the tourists' expectation that local people are the most recent pioneers. Implicated in survey responses, tourists expect local people to be quaint, friendly, honest, and sincere. They further suppose local people to be undereducated and poor, per survey responses. Thus, cultural icons function to shape not just an experience in Mountainville, but also the expectation of who Mountainvillians are.

This discussion describes how icons are purposely used by business owners to lead tourists through their experiences in Mountainville. Connecting to tourists' perceptions of Appalachia, which may be based on stereotypes projected by national

media, these icons deliver a contrived version of Mountainville culture and people. This version of culture is devised by tourism producers to create a sense of Mountainville as a unique enough tourist destination. Nonetheless, as tourists experience this contrived version, their emotions, personal identities, even memories and values are evoked, consequently attaching sincere meanings to the otherwise contrived icons. The next section describes what meanings are attached to icons and consumed in paintings created and purchased in an art and souvenir market.

Facilitating the Sale of Art through Icons

Perhaps the most significant use of icons is to engage the tourist enough that they want to possess the icon. The third function of icons observed in this research is to facilitate the sale of art. Tourist art provides an appropriate and accessible form through which the icon is possessed. The medium of tourist art also allows the opportunity to see the attachment of meanings by consumers, whom this research sees as portrayed by both artists and art patrons.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, who understood cultural experiences to be of value to one's social status, identified as social or symbolic capital, a coherency of cultural taste is discernable by examining the levels and kinds of value assigned to particular events or artifacts. Moulin looks at this hierarchy of aesthetic values in his sociological research on the price determination with the French art market (Moulin 1987). Even though tastes are expressed by individuals, tastes and preferences for art are shaped by institutions and by the elite fine arts market (McCarthy, et al., 2005; Moulin 1987; Robertson 2005). To Bourdieu, the logic of cultural taste is related to class structures, as one's class background and education determines their aesthetic tastes (Bourdieu 1984). For

example, an opera would be assigned a higher value of symbolic capital than a monster truck rally because of the degree of education or cultural knowledge (language, structure of the story, composer) needed to participate fully as an audience member.

Bourdieu's idea of symbolic capital is useful to examining tourist art because tourism itself is an industry based on the promotion of one's social status. To be able to go on vacation is a sign of wealth and control of one's resources. Tourist art conveys symbolic capital not only by exhibiting where one has been, but also by suggesting one's cultural knowledge of art, artists, and the hierarchy of art values. This discussion is appropriate at this point not so much to place value on art work or on the people who produce or consume the art, but rather to recognize the position of Appalachian tourist art in the national or international art market.

Art produced in an Appalachian tourist town can be of high quality according to design elements, but it still remains in the mediocrity of the art world. Based on stylistic qualities reinforced by the national/international hierarchy of art critics, dealers, and museums, tourist art is associated not with master painters like Picasso or Pissaro, nor with kitschier tourist art that is "cheap, crude, and mass produced" (Kasfir 1999:101). Rather, tourist arts are hierarchally ranked, by this research's observations, within the middle class's love affair with Thomas Kinkade, Wyland, and art that is easily identifiable, not abstract, but pretty, idyllic, and romanticized. The icons used in tourist art are produced as realistic subjects in picturesque contexts so to give the viewer an easy dose of pleantry- pleantry that factors into decisions to buy art. Pleantry, however, may be based more on emotional reactions than on class positions. Bourdieu's notion of symbolic capital, although helpful, does not exclusively resolve the persistence of the

consumption of Appalachian images. As the next section explains, the third function of icons, as I have observed, is to make art saleable by stimulating emotional reactions to the images by both artists and art viewers, who represent different class positions.

Art Images Resonate With the Canon of Regional Icons: Selection, Use, and Reception of Icons

Earlier in this chapter, I presented a brief historical account of the conceptualization of Appalachia in images from newspapers, film, television, and books. The most essentialized (and subsequently inaccurate) characterizations of Appalachian people that may be gleaned from this account are that people from Appalachia are strange and peculiar, stuck in the past, and more embedded than the American mainstream in a relationship with nature. These characterizations, of course, oversimplify and grossly misrepresent both historical and contemporary life in the region. Despite the misrepresentation, these characterizations have come to dominant mindsets, associations, and even expectations in people encountering Appalachia.

Having developed some sense of a canon of Appalachian regional images, I turn now to a comparison of that canon to the art that I observed in galleries in Mountainville during my research period. The commonalities between the public configuration of Appalachian culture and the expressions of culture embedded in these paintings demonstrate the direct relationship between structural projection of ideas on a societal scale and assimilation of those ideas on an individual scale. According to anthropologist Marushka Svasek in her discussion of art and cultural production, “we attribute values to objects, but are also influenced by the ideas or values they express” (Svasek 2007:12).

Even though my argument claims that ideas about Appalachia formed in the national public media which structurally enculturate perceptions of Appalachia in

individual American cultural members, I acknowledge the evocation of individual agency and power of the individual to respond in multiple ways to dominant cultural ideas. In examining the examples of art chosen for this chapter, it is important to remember that the artists I interviewed adamantly claimed to paint what they wanted to paint. When I asked artists how they went about selecting subjects to paint, they often reported that they chose subjects personal to them. They did not feel like they compromised their art or catered excessively to tourists' tastes. From their words, it is possible to see how they might ignore dominant perceptions about Appalachian iconography and act more accordingly to their individual interests and values.

The market of tourist art, however, acts as a selector for those artists who do produce appropriate styles and subjects. Artists who painted abstractly or beyond subjects of Appalachian culture did not survive long in this economy. So for those artists who do survive in this market, icons associated with Appalachia become commodities as the individual artists choose to paint them. The act of choosing to paint in a specific style and in a specific subject engages the individual agency of the artist, albeit with market driven icons and culturally dominant visions of Appalachian culture.

Mountains

When a visitor inquires about the vacation opportunities in Mountainville, he/she receives literature containing images of undeveloped mountains. When this same visitor decides to vacation in Mountainville, he/she experiences buildings with architectural styles that reflect the slopes and contours of mountains. Joined with the vast number of paintings of mountains, these images serve as icons that symbolize and project the predominance of nature that is perceived as untamed and boundless in Mountainville.

To illustrate such paintings, Figures 6.1 and 6.2 present two examples from artists who have enjoyed successful, stable, and long-term careers in Mountainville. These artists paint the same subjects they began painting twenty to thirty years ago. According to each of these artists, their paintings depict what they see every day. When I asked each artist what he painted, each responded as follows:

I paint where I live, and I paint the people I live with, and I paint my impressions of my surroundings. - Greg



Figure 6.1 In the Clouds



Figure 6.2 Autumn Splendor

So I paint what I know, and growing up here in the mountains, I know the mountains...and if you paint what you know it's a better piece. -Van

They paint what they know is important to them and what they feel most connected to in their natural environment (Interview GW; Interview VH). For these artists, the mountain icon functions as a catalyst to convey personal meaning and experience with the local environment. Despite painting similar scenes of the mountain landscape for the duration of their careers, these artists have adjusted their color palettes to include brighter and more popular colors. This reflects not only their attention to color trends in popular culture, but also the embodiment of such trends in the artists themselves.

Black Bears

In the body of images used in Mountainville, none is as singularly prolific as the icon of the black bear. Like images of the mountains, images of black bears symbolize nature and the untamable wilderness. This icon is often imbued with anthropomorphic features and exhibits personality traits and human behaviors which visitors may relate to. According to one artist, who had a previous career as an official in the nearby National Park, painting animals allows for a more interactive experience between viewer and subject- an experience facilitated by the way the artist portrays the subject. Building on her intimate knowledge of mountain wildlife, this artist incorporates human-like expressions to her subjects. When asked why she paints animals so prolifically, this artist responded by:



I like to paint animals because you can get a personality and a character. Bears are what's pulling people into the area, so...that was another reason I decided to do a real bear. -Gertie

This artist also understands the role of the black bear icon as an effective attraction that brings people into Mountainville (Interview GD). She realizes that people are interested in seeing black bears, especially because of their assigned status as a

Figure 6.3 Bear Cubs

symbol of both cuteness and wildness. Thus, Gertie produces art that contains icons of black bears because she understands that buyers will find them more appealing. There are several other artists that produce paintings

containing bears. Many of them reproduce these icons in a naturalistic style void of any indication of anthropomorphism.

Hillbillies and Pioneer Mountain Culture

According to the content analysis of paintings in galleries, as reported in Chapter Five, the largest body of paintings depicts elements of rural, pioneer life in the mountains. Although these paintings do not depict actual images of hillbillies of the exaggerated cartoon type, they do suggest a romanticized portrayal of mountain life. For the artists that paint these cultural scenes, images of cabins, churches, barns, farmsteads, etc. act as icons that convey value and appreciation for life in the past. For example, one artist describes how she decides what to paint:



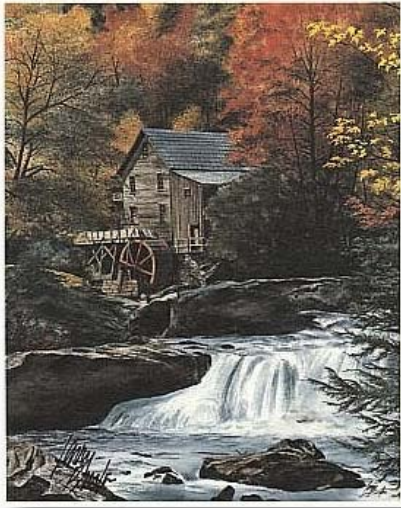
Figure 6.4 The Barn

I live here. I drive down these roads. I see these things, and they disappear on me. I'm recording them as fast as I can, with my camera and my painting. - Lyla

For Lyla, capturing the material cultural landscape before local land gets developed into overnight rental communities, shopping centers, or roads is a passionate motivation- one that has

compelled Lyla to be involved in local zoning policy politics (Interview LM).

This pattern of value for the past and historical landscapes is repeated in another artist's work and recollections of how he selects his subjects (Interview LB). He even exaggerates distances he would go to paint a certain location that fits within his visual scheme.



If I find something that I really want to paint, a really nice covered bridge, or a gristmill, I'll drive 500 miles to paint it. - Luke

And finally, a fifth artist projects her personal value and connection to religion in her subjects of choice (Interview DC).

Figure 6.5 The Gristmill

I love to paint churches, the little white frame churches...and I'm always scouting for those. -Denise



Figure 6.6 The Country Church

These examples of paintings produced for sale demonstrate the role that icons play in Mountainville's art market. Images of mountains, bears, and pioneer mountain life have come to mean something significant to both viewers and artists. In this context of tourist paintings, that significance is related to assumptions about Appalachian culture. These icons function to assert cultural constructions about Appalachia. Because the Appalachian region has been socio-historically constructed as a distinct cultural region in the public mind set and because tourists have been influenced to expect an experience with this constructed culture, this body of artwork, and particularly paintings, functions to reinforce and legitimate pre-conceived cultural conceptions. In other words, Appalachia has been prescribed as a regional culture stuck in the past with poor, rural, simple folk

tied to tradition and religion. People are led to believe that they can personally experience such a culture. These icons convey messages that not only characterize the area as poor, rural, religious, as well as pristine, undeveloped, and stuck in the past, but that also these characterizations become manifest in experiences with art and paintings. Icons that allow tourists to engage the artist, their own emotion, and their experience certainly help to facilitate sales.

The artists' words describing their subject choices give a deeper account of the individualized value for these icons. In the examples above, extracted from field interviews, artists communicate passion, commitment, and attachment to their subjects. Especially of, but not limited to, mountainscapes, artists convincingly enjoy painting these iconic subjects and would paint them anyway even if the images did not reference cultural constructions of the Appalachian region or tourists' expectations of experiences with the local. Their commitment shows the importance of painting personally relevant subjects over more stereotypical ones. For most of the artists, these icons, despite their laden social meanings, are significant because of personal experiences and subsequent reflectiveness of those experiences. Perhaps the icons serve not just a social function, but also a personal function in communicating through paint what is valued by the artist as an individual cultural member.

Noting the emotional experience of producing a painting, I cannot deny that emotion is also a part of the consumption of a painting. As I was told many times by gallery owners, gallery workers, and artists, emotion sells art. Any range of positive emotions attached to an icon used in a painting is a key ingredient to its sale. The next two chapters further explore the power of emotion in the selling of paintings.

Many tourists reinforce those icons present in the art market by wanting to possess and take home a souvenir of their vacation experiences. Since their expectations and experiences are shaped by perceptions of Appalachia, their demands as consumers develop a logic of appropriate visual art. Again, no abstract, no urban scenes, and no minority populations are readily available subjects in the art market. Rather, subjects that allow the tourist to express his/her self and his/her experience in a form that they can take home are what make up the body of paintings in the market. In this sense, the tourist evokes his/her consumer agency, engages, and often perpetuates associations of Appalachian culture on an individual scale.

To illustrate the emotional reactions to this body of paintings, below are four of the most popular paintings with comments given by gallery visitors. Figure 6.7, called “Autumn,” was produced by Joseph Gideon. Figure 6.8 is a depiction by artist Van Headrick of a popularly visited waterfall. Figure 6.9 and Figure 6.10 are both nostalgic representations created by Lyell Richardson and Greg Wright respectively. Each of these paintings symbolize conceptualizations of Appalachia as a regional culture mired in isolated wilderness, rugged terrain, self-sufficient living, rural simplicity, and a romantic past. When I asked gallery visitors about their reactions to paintings they purchased, they often remarked with enthusiastic and positive comments. Following are some excerpts of what they said:

Beautiful.

Realistic.

We climbed the falls.

[We] met the artist, [we’re] interested in the history of the area.

[What appeals to me is] nostalgia- we love the area.

It made us smile.



Figure 6.7 Autumn



Figure 6.8 Abrams Falls



Figure 6.9 In Your Dreams

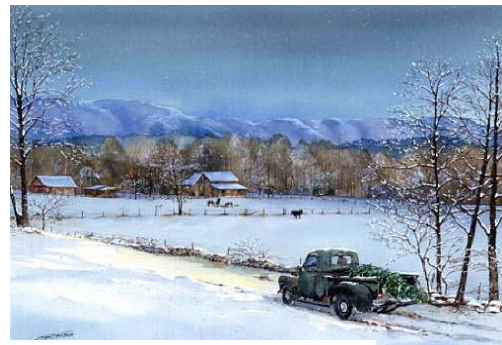


Figure 6.10 Going Home

In these reactions, the engagement between the viewer and the subject matter (as portrayed by the artist) is apparent and personal. These reactions also suggest an embodiment of cultural ideas about Appalachia. In many of my observations of painting purchases, buyers were pleased to find exactly what they were looking for. There were of course gallery visitors who did not make any purchases. These folks were often visiting galleries as an activity unto itself and uncommitted to acting as buyers in the market. There were also a small number of gallery visitors who sought art that was stylistically different. For those gallery visitors who did make purchases, they operated under pre-

conceived notions of appropriate painting subject matter and contextualized their purchases within these pre-conceptions. Their categories of appropriate art and often their preferences for specific subject matter are conditioned by over-arching cultural ideas of Appalachian culture and landscape. Perhaps more significantly, these reactions to paintings from the viewers say more about their lives and the kinds of things they value (like undeveloped scenery, personal accomplishment and experience, and lifestyles of historical nature).

In this chapter, I have described how images of local scenes function as cultural icons. These images become cultural icons through the generation of and attachment of meanings held by artists, tourists, and other actors in a local tourism-based economy. These icons are then used to lure tourists, to shape their expectations and experiences, to promote local attractions, and to facilitate the sale of art. From this perspective, certain icons are preferred over others and many icons that might represent local culture more adequately are not even available.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ADJUSTING THE LIGHT: STRATEGIES USED TO MINIMIZE PERCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY

One of the artists interviewed for this project, Mitchell, is very talented at drawing and painting. After one year of making three to four hundred dollars a day as a craftsman selling charcoal drawings at a local amusement park, Mitchell decided to venture out on his own. He figured overhead costs of an individually owned gallery business would be significantly less than the large overhead and commission prices taken by the amusement park. Mitchell admittedly assumed that his images would be well received by the general public and that financial success would follow him from the amusement park to his gallery. Although he preferred the contrast between light and dark in his charcoal drawings, Mitchell did paint some images with colors- mainly because gallery visitors asked for more color. All of his subjects were representative of scenes from the local geography. After nine months of few sales, Mitchell decided to close his gallery and return to the regional city where his job opportunities fared better- even though such opportunities were outside of the art market. He, like many artists, was burdened by the challenges inherent in a tourist market. Fluctuating flows of visitors and trying to satisfy consumer tastes and preferences are the biggest challenges to making profits in a tourist art market, and in Mitchell's case, meeting his cost of living. Mitchell could not secure a level of livelihood necessary to pay for his housing, utilities, food costs, etc.

This example of an artist's loss in the market represents the theme of this chapter- avoiding economic risk. This chapter examines the strategies utilized by artists to minimize their uncertainties and risks in a tourism economy. Because so many objects are in competition for space in the tourist's home and for money that the tourist will pay,

artists must utilize strategies to give their particular art work an advantage over other products. Addressing the question, what are the strategies and behaviors practiced by artists in order to sell to tourists, this chapter looks into the structural dynamics of the local tourist market and focuses on the agency that artists invoke to respond to structural pressures. Indeed, market strategies affect the way art objects are interpreted and experienced (Svasek 2007). By reading art market trends and devising ways to attract patrons, artists act as rational agents exerting effort to control and manage tourists to buy their art. Artists in Mountainville must possess two different areas of expertise, business sense and art and design skill.

Art and Market

A popular belief in American society is that skilled artists may not be successful business people. Aside from film and music industry entertainers, visual artists are generally associated with earning low incomes. Gimmicks like “starving artist” art show held at Holiday Inn hotels give the impression that artists are poor. Moreover, the proportion of articles in art and craft magazines like The Artist, American Craft, ArtNews, and American Artist, devoted to pricing and marketing art indicate the perspective that artists need coaching in the business side of their art professions. Such beliefs ignore artists who have sustained and managed galleries and studios with high financial returns. This belief also does not account for the possibility that artists may be proficient in business but lack skills in design. Nonetheless, this belief emblemizes the real challenges, albeit not just for artists, that exist in a capitalist market.

Surveying a history of the art market and its relationship to commercial markets reveals three dramatic shifts in the economic basis for art and in the amount of control

artists have in relation to their art production as their art entered the market. A running thread throughout the history of the art market seems to indicate the commercial presence in the motivation to make art (Heilbrun and Gray 1993; Marquis 1991; Savage 1969; Solkin 1993). In the 14th century, the first guild of artists was established in Paris to protect artists' interests in commissioned work. Guild artists were able to gather and maintain control of the kind of work being produced for patrons; thus, perpetuating traditional styles while resisting newer forms of aesthetics. Artists experienced a 17th century professional split between those who "expanded the cultural vision of reality" (Plattner 1996:29), supported by the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, and those who specialized in technical skills devoted to decorating. This shift led to the establishment of the art academy and put the control of aesthetic development into the gate-keeping hands of state officials. Indeed, the buying and selling of art was facilitated by acceptance and entrance into the official art salons, most of which occurred in Paris.

The art movement of Impressionism during the late 1800s proved that financial success was possible for artists without the approval of state patronage or acceptance into state sponsored salons. As the catalyst for the emergence of a dealer-critic structure of the art market, the Impressionists like Monet, Degas, and Renoir, showed that market value of art pieces were negotiated by dealers, private collectors, independent exhibits, and art auctions- not by entrance into the salons. Moreover, this shift in market structure demonstrated that design flaws perceived by art critics in an art object did not impede on the object's reception and subsequent success in the market. The market for art opened up with the Impressionists and continued into the twentieth century severely questioning the art critic's impact on the legitimacy and success of an art object (Plattner 1996:28-32;

Moulin 1987). Critical judgments about the quality of art lost their authority and made way for art to be assessed more by emotional responses from the populace- making art the most subjective human activity available.

Perceptions of Risk and Uncertainty in the Art Market

Instead of serving the aesthetics of commissioning patrons, state officials, or art critics, artists who produce in a tourism market must serve the stylistic tastes of the public who travel to that destination. The tourism industry, however, is uncertain with fluctuating visitor counts and unreliable demand to visit the destination. Moreover, other factors such as the health of the national economy, gas prices, and tourists' stylistic tastes may change from season to season affecting the degree of uncertainty and risk perceived by artists.

It's always a guessing game. It's always a guessing game, always. We have two or three things [gallery products] that have done extremely well in these last four years, and I've invested a lot of money in the new stuff from these people from the spring, and we just have to hope they're going to do well again this year. The woman who does this work...been in the gallery since we opened, and we...it used to be that we couldn't keep her work. We just couldn't keep it in the gallery, and now...we're lucky if we sell ten pieces a year. I don't know why (Interview JA).

Many artists reported to me that they felt validated for their art if someone bought it (Fieldnotes). Indeed, arts researcher Joan Jeffri reports that raised prices indicate to the art world that the artist is succeeding (Jeffri 2005:131). Because market success is often interpreted by artists to be a measure of aesthetic success,¹⁵ Thomas Kinkade is a perfect

¹⁵ As is true for many segments of American culture, market performance is a measure of social success. At the time of this writing, the last of the Harry Potter books was applauded on television's nightly news, not for its storytelling elements or character development, but for being the highest grossing book (within one week) ever released.

example of a national artist who has masterminded the marketing of art and out sells in volume any artist in the history of art. Kinkade is relevant here because three galleries in Mountainville carry his work. Moreover, his gallery presence in shopping malls across the United States make him very accessible, hence popular, to consumers. Because of his market popularity, there is a general social perception that he is an artist of aesthetic quality.

Artists in the local economy of Mountainville constantly work to figure out how to connect experientially with the buyer on an individual level rather than producing art to expand their culture's vision of reality (Fieldnotes). Their efforts indicate the kinds of decisions they make to maneuver the risks and uncertainties they encounter within a market context. Drawing from formalist debates and neoclassical economics, this project focuses on the behaviors of artists and their rational choices to calculate ways to maximize their market performance (Gudeman 2008; Wilk and Cliggett 2007).

Because of the subjective and often emotional nature of an art experience, especially when emotion is cultivated and stirred, rational decisions regarding the sale of art are often overlooked. Indeed, "artists are not expected to act like economizing individuals" (Plattner 1989:12). Stemming from Renaissance ideas about human agency, social scientists conceptualize individuals as endowed with the capacity for reason.

Renaissance philosophers saw reason manifest into social rules which aimed to control passion and to guide decision making in a calculated fashion (Jaeger 2001:21-22). Thus,

Especially in capitalist cultures, status or social importance is solidly based on one's level of production and expressed by one's level of consumption- although these levels may not be corresponding. For an artist who achieves a high volume of sales generally means that the public appreciates and cherishes his/her work. In Mountainville, artists who have reputations as skilled artists and who signify valued art have a high volume of sales starting at around \$300,000.

human agency is seen as equipping people with the capacity to develop logic that informs their behavior, their choices, and ultimately their world view. It is this capacity for logic that the formalist debate considers. Whereas, the substantivist approach examines the affects institutions have upon people's economic activity (Wilk and Cliggett 2007). From the substantivist perspective, this project considers the characterization of the transaction of the Mountainville art market.

Artists in Mountainville live in a commercial economy. They have specialized labor and knowledge which are used to produce a commodity. The commodity is imbued with a market value represented by money. This commodity is then exchanged within formal and regulated transactions. Occurring between Mountainville artists and their art patrons, transactions constitute mutuality of shared language, gestures, processes, as well as shared knowledge of the rules and norms in the market (Gudeman 2008). The interactions of mutuality and the shared codes of exchange helps this study build upon research of tourist arts conducted only within non-Western tourist markets.

Typical within market economies are short-run commercial exchanges between parties. In short-run exchanges, relations are impersonal and meaning is confined to the immediate encounter (Plattner 1989:211). This differs from less commercialized transactions during which meaning is sustained over longer time periods and through long-term relations. Economic systems of reciprocity and gift-giving are examples of such long-term exchanges. Art markets often combine elements of commercial/market economics with elements of reciprocity prevalent in peasant economies. Artists in Mountainville try to sustain long-term relationships within the market, particularly through collector clubs, to build a stable and reliable consumer base.

Studies of peasant economies also help to build an understanding of risk and responses to risk. From his study about risk aversion in peasant populations, anthropologist Frank Ellis defines risk as that subjective matter of a farmer's beliefs about uncertain events or conditions. Risk is the entire "mechanism" by which people make decisions in regard to certain events (Ellis 1988: 83). Uncertainties, according to Ellis, are the "character of economic environment" or the context to which one responds with decisions about economic practices (Ellis 1988:83). This project recognizes that risks are culturally defined. Rather than being considered an objective phenomenon, "risks" and notions of risk are shaped by social, cultural, and historical values and beliefs (Lupton 1999; Kennedy 2002; Wilk and Cliggett 2007). This analysis finds it most useful to identify risks and uncertainties as the perception of unfortunate, unplanned, and undesired outcomes often resulting in the perceived chance of increased scarcity of resources. The source of risk in an art market comes predominantly, although not exclusively, from "incomplete information" (Plattner 1989: 214) or a "lack of predetermination" (Jaeger 2001:17). In other words, risk and uncertainty arise in situations where artists do not know all that may factor in the outcome and do not have complete control in creating the outcome (the outcome being the sale of an art piece).

Studies conducted by anthropologists Ellis (1988) and Cashdan (1990) of risk-averse behaviors within peasant populations helped guide this research to look at ways artists and galleries avoid risk and to examine coping strategies in the art market. Ellis suggests that peasants in economically risky situations will choose self-security or family-security over maximizing profits as well as display inhibitions to innovate (Ellis 1988:93-94). Such peasants, according to Ellis, will try to maintain their way of living

and safeguard resources for their family. Cashdan, on the other hand, suggests that peasants who are risk-averse will adopt innovation when it is beneficial. Cashdan also describes coping mechanisms used during economic risk situations to include obtaining new information and selecting options based on the specific characteristics of the economic possibilities (1990:12-13). More or less, this occurs when people investigate and seek out alternatives to their course of direction.

Strategies to Minimize Perceptions of Risk

While I realize that the artists in Mountainville are not peasants, I suggest that this attention to human agency nonetheless helps to conceptualize artists as rational actors and contributes a sense of economic function to the strategies they employ. For example, Christopher Steiner documents production techniques used by African mask carvers to make their new masks look like old masks, which are much more desired by art collectors (Steiner 1995). Also, Sarah Hill (1997) describes the incorporation of new materials in Cherokee women's traditional basket making as these materials became accessible to and cost effective for the women.

Literature from consumption studies echo this conceptualization of artists as actors with varying degrees of choice in the kinds of decisions afforded to them which affect the processes by which their art is produced, bought, and sold (Friedman 1994; Kopytoff 1992; Lofgren 1994; McCracken 1988, 2005). Artists are not entirely bound by their economic conditions, nor are they free from their economic constraints. Hence, they maneuver market risks with a combination of innovation and coping mechanisms. The field data in this chapter examines the choices artists are able to make and the rationales supporting such choices.

Moreover, artists must compete with each other, with other goods producers, and with already consumed art that tourists may have at home. Because of tourists' limited resources, time, money, and wall space, artists creatively find ways to attract, to cultivate, and to finalize sales. Indeed, "sales techniques depend on the nature of the clientele" (Moulin 1987:154). These efforts constitute strategies employed to minimize the artists' economic risk and express the capacity for creativity inherent in processes of consumption.

According to consumption literature, consumption offers people a chance to create meaning by recontextualizing an object as it is plucked from stages of production and distribution to stages of possession and use (Belk 1988; Carrier 1990; Douglas 1992; Miller 1987). People attach meanings to objects that express something of their personal identity to others, whether or not the object was intended for that purpose. Because consumption is a process carried out across space and time, there exists many opportunities to see human creativity directed not just at the consumable object, but also at shaping the experiences with and the context of the object. As this project shows, artists, who act as consumers of Appalachian icons, not only create expressive meanings of objects, they also create a repertoire of ideas and schemes to motivate other consumers (tourists) to buy in the hopes of minimizing the artists' economic risk.

Attractive and Emotional Subjects

The first step towards selling art and to attract tourists to the gallery is to paint subjects that tourists want to look at. A lot of people in Mountainville seem to wander somewhat aimlessly in and out of galleries, indicated by a lack of purchase or a lack of expressed interest in what the gallery exhibits. Closer scrutiny reveals that people look

for subject matter in art pieces that correspond to their definitions of local scenes (Fieldnotes). According to one artist, “the subject is the most important thing, especially with the Appalachian culture” (Interview VH). That subject matter has such an effect on purchase decisions indicates some level of a painting’s object agency, a notion developed by Alfred Gell (Gell 1998) and elaborated by Marushka Svasek (Svasek 2007). Object agency refers to the power attributed to an object by its context of social processes to stimulate a response from the object’s viewer. Thus, the first strategy followed by most Mountainville artists to minimize economic risk is to choose to create paintings imbued with symbolic images that represent what the artist believes to be tourists’ perceptions of the local.

Painted images of the local connect to the conundrum of authenticity introduced in Chapter Two. Some artists report that they paint the most typical of Appalachian scenes, like mountains and cabins, because of personal sentiment towards and experience of the area, rather than to ensure one’s place in the market. These images, however, are sold in the market, which indicates what kind of perceptions of place consumers hold, or at least what kind of consumer the paintings attract (Moulin 1987). The basis for these perceptions, as discussed in the preceding chapter, stems from a socio-historical belief that Appalachia is a place of cultural difference coupled with experiences through the tourism industry that bring to life such beliefs. Beliefs and perceptions about Appalachia essentialize its culture and geography and help to establish a limited body of symbols that connote Appalachia.

Artists are very aware of the assumptions made about Appalachian culture. Some even hold such assumptions to be true characterizations of neighboring and more remote

towns- never their own town and always some other undesirable place. Regardless of their use of characterizations to identify others, the artists do rely on such perceptions to make their paintings more relatable to the cultural perceptions assumed to be used by tourists visiting Appalachia. By placing images that fit the culturally constructed categories of Appalachian subjects and landscapes, artists hope to attract visitors to their galleries.

For example, artist Van Headrick's painting, "Reflections," depicts a view from inside the porch of a log cabin looking out at a deer in the cabin's yard. The deer is eating grass, and trees bloom their spring buds in the background. This painting fits several culturally constructed categories of Appalachia. Most significantly, a cabin is depicted, and the pioneer lifestyle lived out in rural, pastoral settings associated with the cabin is connoted. Secondly, wildlife, specifically a deer, is depicted and connects to the wilderness, untamed, backwoods, and undeveloped landscape that is associated with the Appalachian region. Because tourists can see and experience both a cabin and a deer in the national park, this image is further inscribed as an appropriation of Appalachian culture and place, making it attractive to onlookers.

The three most frequently used groups of icons, in the body of art sold in Mountainville are of buildings (cabins, churches, and barns), landscapes (mountains and rivers), and wildlife (flowers and bears). Not only do galleries offer these paintings of icons, they offer paintings portraying icons in a realistic style. Icons are represented realistically in paintings because of the consumer's typical perspective towards a definition of art as something that is recognizable. One artist told me that, "people come in with the conception that real art looks like the real object, and that's how you tell that

it's a good artist, is by how good they can represent that object, how photographic they can make it," (Interview MP). Thus, the dominant style of the paintings available for sale in Mountainville's art market is realistic in representation. Viewers of this art can easily and immediately understand what the paintings depict. The range of interpretation of the subject is minimal. One painter shared an anecdote of a gallery visitor who objected to the way a deer's eyes were painted:

One guy came in and I was painting a huge portrait of a deer, and he kept looking at it. He finally said, "You know a deer's eyes don't look that way." And I said, "Really, hmm." He said, "They really don't, you need to change that." "Oh, what do they look like?" He started describing what the eyes should look like. I said, "Well, pretty good except for one thing. You're describing a dead deer. This one's alive." He said, "I'm a deer hunter. I know what their eyes look like" (Interview GD).

This artist's experience demonstrates the demand that gallery visitors have for realism in paintings and the local consumers' intolerance for work that may be more interpretive. When asked about abstract styled paintings, some artists claimed that abstract art was a way to fool the audience. One artist even considered it to be unethical to expect money for such work. These responses are proof that some artists consume the same popular aesthetics as their buyers. Creating an object containing appropriate symbols and images depicted in a style forced by the market is the first step Mountainville artists take to securing a livelihood and minimizing risk. The second step is to endow the image with emotional meaning understood by the viewer.

Many of the images present in paintings produced for the Mountainville art market have gained through frequent repetition a central position in the communication aspect of the art. Viewers gaze upon these images with a vocabulary of symbols and

meanings (Morgan and Welton 1992) informed by a history of media's characterization of Appalachian culture. Because images and meanings of Appalachia are internalized by consumers (including artists and tourists), reading repetitive images of Appalachia perpetuate assumptions and myths about Appalachian culture. Thereby, such images like cabins, churches, mountains, and black bears have acquired rich and relatively stable connotations. Not only are these images imbued with cultural connotations, personal factors and experience also shape viewer's responsiveness and sensitivity to meanings attached to images.

Images coupled with meaning are used as cultural icons to facilitate economic transactions, thereby undergoing a process of commodification. Through the process of commodification, Appalachian culture and geography is made into an object (a painting) that is then assigned a particular market value exchangeable with money. For the art patron, commodification enables the possession of a piece of culture. Buying a painting of a mountainscape, for example, allows the person to take that mountain scene with them, display it in their home, and even retell their experience of both the place and the painting to others. Essentially, the painting becomes something about the collector. Since an exchange of value occurs through the transactions between artists and tourists, usually money for the painting, Appalachian culture becomes collected and possessed.

The only reason people buy any art is because their heart responds to it (Interview LM).

They [art buyers] like something that's about them sometimes (Interview DC).

A key component in the process of commodification is the motivation to buy Appalachian icons. The sources of such motivation come from personal and cultural

meanings that tourists have associated with the art and what it represents. On a societal scale, Americans are taught to be consumers and collectors of things that express our cultural and individual identities, values, and tastes/opinions (Clifford 1988; Elsner and Cardinal 1995). The act of touring is based on a cultural desire to collect (experience, knowledge, souvenirs of) places unfamiliar to the tourist. The tourism industry provides a venue or opportunity for people to collect while on vacation. Thus, tourists coming to Appalachia operate under a meta-cultural influence to find objects they can collect that express their values and perspectives.

Among individuals, such expressions may vary. In the art market of Mountainville, however, individual tastes and desires affect a rather limited market selection. For example, many tourists express a desire for paintings that connote meanings of nostalgia or romantic notions of rural life (Fieldnotes). In anthropological terms, these paintings freeze Appalachian culture into an ethnographic present that does not account for real time changes (Rosaldo 1989). These desires on the part of tourists perceive the past and rural life to be pristine, quaint, simple, and easy- much like analyses of local color writers and certainly not characteristics of the actual experiences of pioneer and rural lives. Artists recognize these perceptions and convey corresponding meanings in the icons they paint. One artist described to me how he approached painting the cabins preserved by the National Park:

I have a [mountain] cove series and I visited the little cabins at [mountain] cove, and I tried to give each one its own personality...I want them [visitors] buying that piece of work because it's something that they'll see each day, and it'll put a smile on their face (Interview VH).

A second artist explained the extent of the tourists' love of the preserved pioneer sites within the national park:

They like realism...they've been to [mountain] cove, and they see something and they want to take it home to remember it. And there's a lot of people that actually really are in love with [mountain] cove. They've even got rooms in their house where there's nothing but [mountain] cove stuff (Interview LB).

Emotions, like nostalgia, romance, and peacefulness, connect to the "romantic" part of the romantic realism that permeates Mountainville art. Such emotional qualities are purposefully attached to images by artists in the hope of stimulating the viewer. Although artists are quite open about this strategy, some are at the same time genuinely creating paintings that evoke positive emotions. For example, Lyell, an artist who has developed a successful art career says: "I hope my paintings...capture more than you can capture with a camera. I hope it stirs some emotions...I try to capture those feelings...of tranquility (Interview LB). For many artists, depicting material culture of the past with nostalgia and romance is a way to preserve history, albeit with romantic emotional overtones.

I paint basically what I know and find to be pleasant. There're all kinds of reasons to paint. In school they said, "well, if it evokes emotion, that's a reason." Well I could paint a dead dog, road kill over here, and it would evoke an emotion, but it's not one you would want. So I'm painting the things that I find that are meaningful...I'm painting things that I see disappearing...and the things that are going away (Interview LR).

Lyell believes a painting of a "dead dog, road kill" conveys unpleasant emotions that art viewer try to avoid (Fieldnotes). Even Lyell finds such subjects to be depressing and undesirable. Hence, he avoids such subjects.

Most of Lyell's paintings depict pioneer cabins and homesteads. Lyell sees his art as a way to express his own nostalgic connotation for the past which he also believes will connect to the view's shared sense of values and elicit a sale. Lyell personifies the conundrum of authenticity by sharing his fondness for painting the past while at the same time knowing that tourists are looking for nostalgic depictions of local scenes.

This particular strategy is not an easy one to achieve, however prevalent emotionally imbued paintings are in the Mountainville art market. Creating graphics and images that suggest peace and nostalgia while trying to cope with declining sales, lowering visitor counts, local economic infrastructures, and other work issues is a real challenge for artists. Mitchell, the artist who eventually closed his gallery, reflected on the difficulty of producing emotional and experiential paintings while maintaining a business:

As far as what people are expecting...because, since I'm here in the shop, I can't get out in the landscape as much as I want to...I'm doing this a little bass-ackwards. I've got an image and I've got to create a feel around it instead of seeing what it is, having the feel, and then trying to recreate the feel (Interview MP).

Thus, Mitchell was limited by the physical demands of his gallery to adequately capture and communicate emotion and experience in his paintings. Despite the challenges some artists face of linking personal experience and emotion of the viewer to the painting, this strategy enhances the probability that the viewer will purchase the painting. The personal and emotional attachment between the art and the viewer becomes very important to facilitate in order to minimize the art producer's economic risk. This same artist quoted above describes how he fills his art with emotion:

I'm doing a painting of bears right now, and I'm trying to create, recreate, some mystery...put them in an open field, full sunlight, but within fog. They're coming out of the fog, coming through the grasses and everything, breaking through. A lot of what I do deals with mystery because life to me is a mystery. We're trying to figure everything out, and I love contrast, which is perfect for recreating a sense of mystery, so sometimes, I'll do images coming out of the dark. Sometimes I'll do them fading into nothing, but mystery, a mood of mystery. A mood of mystery, I guess, would be the biggest thing [I try to capture]...yeah, I like drama. I like, you know, mystery. The drama is depicted a lot of times in the same way (Interview MP).

Not only is this artist using a favorite local icon, the black bear is his painting, he is additionally creating an emotional experience for himself and for the viewer by incorporating design elements that suggest drama and mystery. By compounding an appropriate cultural icon with an emotional depiction, this artist betters his chances at making a sale.

Painting for Personal Fulfillment

In addition to creating art objects that attract tourists, artists also create art objects that contain images and symbols that are significant to their own personal values and experiences. For example, a female painter stated, "I at least paint what's all around me. I've got one painting rattling around in my head..., but it's a local thing, it's something I've seen. Several of these paintings, I drive by them every day- my neighbor's barn and the river and things like that" (Interview JS). This personal connection from artist to image serves two purposes. One, performing work that expresses one's values and experience offers personal fulfillment that may be perceived as worth the economic risk to do such work. In these cases, the activity of art creation becomes a coping mechanism in the face of market uncertainty. Many artists told me that if they did not make any

money, at least they were doing what they loved (Fieldnotes). Sharing his/her personal significance of the images an artist paints serves a second purpose as a useful strategy to connect both the artist and the painting to the viewer. Facilitating such a connection in turn contributes to a successful sale¹⁶.

Reflecting the first purpose, one artist explained that a successful painting provided personal fulfillment and may or may not be sellable. The “key to successful painting [is] paint for yourself...as long as the pieces are being done for me and enough of the other stuff is helping me survive and is still for me, I get a chance to not worry about whether it’s [the painting] going to be popular or not” (Interview JG). This particular painter has garnered a vast following of collectors which may be attributed to his passion for art and his personal appeal. Another painter, who paints and sells abstract landscapes in his twelve year old gallery business says, “I just paint what I want to paint when I want to paint” (Interview JA). This abstract artist’s measure of success is based more on his sense of personal fulfillment (having left a stock broker job to paint and open a gallery) and less on sales of his paintings which are supplemented by sales of a diverse inventory of work by other artists and crafts people. A third artist shared his passion for the process of making marks- the actual experience of laying down medium onto paper or canvas. This artist is compelled by this process, and finds a way to connect his focus to the market.

I am into the mark and the texture and the artist’s hand in the work, the media itself, but you’re not going to go to a tourist area and sell marks. It has to be something more, so I use this area...the beauty of this area. What can I do while going after my ideas, what can I do that can sell? And the answer that I’ve come up with is [Mountain] Cove, water,

¹⁶This purpose is explained more fully in the next chapter.

mountain scene, things like that, bears. You know, okay, well let's use that as subject matter, because to me, the subject matter doesn't matter as much as the marks, the human hand involved in the work, the creation of the piece (Interview MP).

This artist continues to explain that in addition to significant personal values and experiences, the images he creates provide an opportunity to fulfill what he perceives as his sense of purpose.

[One of my goals is] to lift the human spirit, yeah, to lift the human spirit....I would love for my artwork [to have] a presence, just being in its presence [would be] a transcending experience, that is what I want to create....I want to create artwork that stands on its own and that's it. It doesn't matter that I did that. I'm not looking for immortality through artwork, although I know some artists that do that. Who cares? We're all going to die....It doesn't matter..., but if I can get that one piece that when people view it, a lot of people have that transcending experience. There's very little in this world that's more valuable to me (Interview MP).

This quote reflects the painter's value for art that brings viewers to the recognition and awareness of sensibilities beyond their spiritual and aesthetic limits. This artist is driven to produce art that broadens one's perceptions and perhaps triggers an emotional sensation of awe.

Other artists hold meanings in the images they paint that signify their sense of purpose as artists, manifesting the conundrum of authenticity towards the degree of agency artist invoke to paint (and consume) certain images over others. Most of the artists interviewed for this study became professional artists after careers and jobs in other industries. For example, one artist was in the military, another was a park ranger, and still another was a stock broker. Making such career changes were in all cases,

financially risky and in some cases personally risky. A middle-aged female painter named Lyla shared with me her fears of being a career painter:

I was afraid that I could not make a living as a plain artist,
right out there, showing their work right there on the walls
for all to see, for all to love or criticize...(Interview LM).

For Lyla, selling her work put her in a personally vulnerable spot open to rejection of her art by visitors. Because she felt personally attached to her art, the risk of personal criticism or rejection slowed her decision to open her own studio. Eventually Lyla opened her own retail space and shared with me her attitude towards coping with the uncertainties of the art business:

I didn't know if it was going to work out or not. I figure
that God put me here, so and evidently blessing it, and so
I'm not questioning anything. I'm rolling with it. Do I have
a business plan? No. I'm just grateful to be here. I was
hoping to make it through the winter, and I did. Yeah it is
[good], because I sure stepped out in faith to do it
(Interview LM).

Lyla's mechanism for coping with uncertainty is based on her religious faith. Lyla copes with market uncertainty by believing she is meant to be an artist. Her belief in her pre-determined purpose as an artist circumvents her need for a business plan. Despite the riskiness of leaving positions with steady incomes, these individuals found more significance in their personhood as artists. The opportunity to do something that these artists feel compelled and love to do is decidedly worth risking life savings and market failure. Being an artist for one Mountainville resident means, "for me it's to live. I live to paint and paint to live" (Interview JG). Comparing painting for himself and painting for the consumer, this same artist claims that the former allows him to maintain his freedom in his art work.

Another artist reports that his purpose for painting is much more personal and spiritual than economic. In our interview, this artist told me that,

I paint because I enjoy painting...I'm blessed, the Lord has blessed me, in that I have the gallery...where people will buy my work...but I don't really do this for the money. The money is a by-product...When you have a gift, when the Lord gives you a gift like this, if you don't use it..., if you don't share that gift then you're abusing it (Interview VH).

Another artist affirms the spiritual sense of painting, "It's just an expression of your soul...It's just so much fun, when you're in right brain mode, the creative mode...side of the brain," (Interview DC).

Ideas about identity and personhood are relative to the artists' explanation and significance of their work to themselves. Moreover, the lifestyle and identity these folks associate with the social category of artist is so desirable that economic risks are viewed as surmountable. Identity is the perceptual understanding of self that links individuals to form collectives. Identity is not merely generated from within the self, but is shaped by social structures like class, generation, and education. Personhood may be understood as that conception of self that is constructed by cultural structures, but then is adopted and lived out by individuals. Thus identity and personhood are deeply connected such that the two concepts may often be intertwined.

As a Western cultural category, "artist" is associated with notions of the individual as free, behavior that is non-conforming, and a spontaneous, unregulated self. At least one artist echoed this cultural perception of the artist as person when he reported that "the main thing [about being a self-employed artist] is you don't have any bosses, you do what you want...If you want to go somewhere, you just go" (Interview HP). For this artist, the value of freedom and self-authority are prominent and desired in his

perception of self. Such emphasis on the person as free from others' demands or influences ignores the hold that social structures, like economic and work structures, have on the social individual.

Another association of the cultural category of "artist" is that of the role of artist to broaden the cultural view of reality. Rooted in the emergence of the modern art period in the seventeenth century, artists are assigned by society the role of expanding the viewer's perspective towards an object, an event, a place, an idea, etc. This cultural role characterizes the personhood of the artist and is adopted and lived out by many of the artists in this project. For example, Lyla's conception of herself as an artist is to help people see things they normally miss.

I feel like I can open people's eyes to the beauty around them a little bit, when I show them something like this, they go, 'that's right there?!' I go, 'yeah.' Artists see these things. God wired us that way, but everybody else sometimes doesn't see (Interview LM).

From Lyla's perspective, fulfilling this role is valuable enough to her to risk lower and variable incomes in a fickle tourism economy. Lyla is typical of other artists in this project. Minimizing their perceptions of economic risks becomes much more imperative for all of them if they are to achieve not just a consistent income but the kind of fulfilling work that art production provides- for both the artist and the buyer.

From observations and interviews, data regarding specific tactics that artists employ to market and sell their work became very clear. In addition to painting meaningful images that are perceived to represent Appalachia in a realistic style, artists also pay heed to titling their work, coordinating color palettes, pricing their work,

producing advertisements and commercials, sending mass mailings, and choosing ideal gallery locations and signage before visitors even walk in.

Titles and Captions

Coupling literature with visual aesthetics, the titles artists give their work and the poetic descriptions they compose about their pieces further convey emotional, romantic, and nostalgic messages about the rural past. As a third strategy employed to minimize risk, titles of paintings and descriptive captions serve to guide the viewer's experience of the art and help him/her to associate pleasant feelings or desirable cultural values with the images. For example, a painting titled "Pathway to Peace" contains a woodland scene with a dirt path curving around rocks along a creek bank. A simple wood construction foot bridge located in the center foreground of the painting presents a focal point for the viewer. The meandering path leads the eye to the background trees in the distance. When a viewer initially looks at this painting, he/she may not think about peace at all. The clearly marked title influences the viewer's reaction to this image by suggesting that this scene is peaceful. The accompanying description elaborates the association:

Everyone needs a special place where they can escape from the stresses of day-to-day living. Now, when you own this stunning new print by..., all you have to do is follow the "Pathway to Peace," and you're there (Pamphlet, LR Gallery).

Continuing this association of peace with the local scenery, another artist associates his fall mountainscape painting with a biblical verse:

"For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." This is one of the most joyful passages in all the Old Testament writings. You are invited to partake of the peace

found in these...Mountains and to clap your hands and sing along. (Pamphlet, JG Gallery).

Both these artists facilitate positive correlations between their images of local scenery and experiences that people on vacation are likely to demand, especially vacationers who set out to relax. These artists clearly make such an experience seem plausible to the viewer if he/she just looks, purchases, and possesses the paintings. Gallery visitors are also prompted to have nostalgic experiences when they view paintings with titles like “In Your Dreams,” a snowy night cabin scene, “Memories in Bloom,” a spring cabin scene, and “Going Home,” a snowy farmhouse scene with an old truck carrying a Christmas tree.

Patriotic themes emerged in paintings with titles like “Free Spirits” and “Liberty,” both of which are mountain scenes with flying birds, and “Mountain Majesty,” another mountainscape with purple colored mountains. Still through other paintings, many viewers are led to connect the natural landscape to sacredness and spirituality. Through titles like “A Bit of Grace,” “Petals of Hope,” and “Nature’s Cathedral,” paintings of flowers and trees insight a status of divinity and holiness. Titling a painting is a strategy keen on generating the kind of reaction viewers have and, to the artist’s advantage, do not want to leave behind. Thus, titles contribute to higher probability of sales.

Color

Color coordinated palettes and/or matte board to match fashionable colors are important elements in the sale of a painting and make up the fourth strategy employed to reduce economic risk and uncertainty. In the Mountainville art market, consumers seldom buy art as an entity of its own. Consumers consider color as well as the destination of the piece they purchase. Artists can enhance their sales if they pay attention to popular colors

in home decorating. Color fads change, however, so artists must be able change their palettes if they want to satisfy consumer tastes. While the 1980s color trends were dominated by pastels and cool colors, current tastes in fashion and home decorating appeal to bright, vivid colors. In gallery observations, the majority of paintings recently produced came from palettes containing rich blues, greens, and reds with virtually no pastels. In addition, matte boards used to set the painting from the frame also were of rich tones- differing from the basic white or off-white mattes.

The influence of the home decorating industry on Mountainville's art market is understood when taking into consideration the huge numbers of second homes and cabin rentals that are decorated in art and decor that reflect local scenes. The impulse to decorate one's cabin vacation home with rustic and re-invented materials and images in contemporary colors presents an oxymoron of refitting the past with the present. As I was visiting an artist in her gallery, the importance of matching one's art to fashionable decorating trends was emphasized by a lady commenting as she entered the gallery. "I love this painting. If I could buy a leather couch this would look so good" (Interview JS).

Yet, following color trends proves to be a challenge, as trends can shift quickly. According to two artists who round out their gallery with items they purchase from wholesale artists, "We try not to follow trends. We try real hard not to buy a color, or trend, or style, or anything like that, because that's dangerous for one thing...but...fads pass. Trends pass. Colors pass. Styles pass" (Interview JA). Most artists prefer to sell to patrons who care little for matching paintings to decor. For an artist whose charcoal drawings did not sell well because they were absent of color, decor art is art not seen.

It [art] matches your decor. It matches your couch, and you put it up, and people go, "Aww," and they don't even have

to look at it. It doesn't engage them...Artwork is an engaging thing. It is something that gives us peace sometimes. It gives us rest from, you know, our daily lives, and that's fine, but I don't want to create work that its sole purpose is to not be seen (Interview MP).

Though some artists choose not to employ the strategy of incorporating trendy colors in their palettes or in their matte boards, the majority of artists see color coordination as contributing to successful sales.

Pricing

Another important strategy to minimize economic risk is to offer the gallery visitor a spectrum of pricing levels, much like what one might find in a museum store. Pricing one's work turns out to be a difficult and somewhat arbitrary task. Rules of thumb advise artists to factor in time, labor, materials, and overhead costs into pricing. Others suggest that artists should charge what they need to live comfortably. This discrepancy in methods of pricing explains why there is an expansive range of price points in the overall art market of Mountainville. During the content analysis of approximately 450 paintings and prints, the range of prices was catalogued between \$6.95 for a small 3x5 inch print to \$11,000 for a large 4x5 foot original painting. The rationality for offering a range of prices for art work is expressed by one gallery owner stating:

And even though we consider ourselves more upscale than a lot of the places around, we still try to have things in the ten dollar price range, something that anybody can afford (Interview JA).

Most painters in Mountainville offer their work in print forms, which allow the visitor to own the image without paying the original painting's price. Note cards are particularly popular with customers who want something small and representative of the art they like. According to one artist, tourists respond well to the note cards because,

they [tourists] want small. They want portable. They want cheap...They've [note cards] always been a big seller. They're easy to pick up. They're cheap. There's eight images in there. Some people frame them up, put them up on their wall (Interview MP).

Diversification of prices is important. It allows consumers of various income levels to purchase something affordable. Artists are attuned, however, to the ways that price points affect consumers' perceived sense of value and quality of the artist's work (Interview KG; Fieldnotes). Normal distribution of prices may actually result in lower overall sales. Artists talk about the strategy of offering products that cluster around ends of the price spectrum (Interview CG; Interview JA; Fieldnotes). Thus, there may be some products available in the \$500 and up range and some in the \$50.00 and lower range with fewer products in the middle range. Mountainville's art market is significantly smaller than the art markets of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, or Santa Fe. The price range reflects the working and middle class incomes that travel to Mountainville. Rarely do artists sell paintings above \$5,000.00 (Fieldnotes).

Artists realize the risk of offering their art at too low of prices (Fieldnotes). Price numbers are relative and consumers can be convinced to see a \$300.00 print as more affordable and more of a value than a \$5,000 original painting (Fieldnotes). Also, the lower the price an artist asks for his/her work, the less valuable the work may seem to the consumer. Subsequently, the artist's reputation may be compromised and viewed as not a high quality artist- one not worthy of collecting. Whereas, a high priced artist may be in more demand because of the public perception that higher priced items suggest consumer wealth and higher economic status. This in turn, reflects positively on the prestige of the artist as one who is collected by wealthy people. People who buy art from this artist may

then count themselves among the wealthy people they perceive to afford the artist's work. Thus, pricing one's paintings and prints is carefully weighed, and gallery owners may offer other products for sale at lower prices.

Oh, those fifteen dollar earring sales are very important to us...but we live on the big hits. You know, we live on the painting sales and the very expensive sculpture and pottery sales. Money flows and pays the bills by selling everything else, but we are able to...well you know if you sell something for five thousand dollars and something for fifty dollars, you can do a whole lot more with five thousand dollars (Interview JA).

In addition to price diversity, some artists and galleries offer patrons price guarantee through membership to a collector's club. By joining a collector's club, members are automatically sent and billed for their individually numbered print which has been released first to the club at a lower price. Once the print is released to the public, its price goes up. These clubs guarantee income for artists, stabilize prices for collectors, and build long term relations between artists and patrons.

Plattner's study of artists in St. Louis testifies to the efforts of artists trying to commercially sell their art by developing long-term, personal relationships with loyal patrons (1996). For art dealers and patrons, long-term relationships provide knowledge of the artists and afford a trusting and reliable relationship. Such long-term trading partnerships are important mechanisms for reducing risks and stabilizing artists' incomes. Such is the case with the artists in Mountainville. Indeed, these artists make many decisions that facilitate a personal connection and relationship with tourists in the hopes of selling their work and securing a livelihood.

Television Advertising

Mountainville has two local cable channels devoted to disseminating information about the town to visitors and residents. One of these channels is called the visitors channel and broadcasts tourism information exclusively. The programming is composed of commercials for attractions, businesses, events, restaurants, and other things tourists may want to participate in while on vacation. Businesses of all sizes advertise on the visitors channel, but most of the commercials feature smaller businesses who pay for shorter commercial times. Many artists I encountered advertise their galleries via commercials on this visitors channel, making it another formal strategy to minimize economic risk (Fieldnotes).

Perhaps what makes cable television commercials so appealing to business owners is the affordability. Thirty second spots are much below broadcast television commercial rates, nearer to \$250.00 per month than the typical \$1,000.00 plus per month. Oftentimes, commercials are significantly cheaper than printed brochures and had the potential to reach larger audiences. Locally produced and filmed on-site, commercials show the artist creating his/her work- making plain the physical and personal connection between art and maker. Most commercials star the artist's family members relaying details about the artist's personal history as well as his/her motivation and methods of art production. The use of family actors helps to create a perception of the artist as down-to-earth, relatable, and wholesome. Such characterizations additionally offer the tourist an experience with artisans working in what resembles a cottage industry. Work conditions as portrayed in the commercial contrast the wage-labored, corporate commercialism that many tourists cope with regularly. These commercials not only introduce the artist and

his/her family to tourists, they also celebrate the artist such that the tourist recognizes the artist's name, the gallery, and the art. From a practical standpoint, these commercials visualize directions to the gallery with animated maps and voice-overs. This information is seen as vital to artists who use commercials as a strategy to increase gallery visits and sales.

Print Media

Mass mailings of brochures with photographic images and information are a common strategy used by artists to get their work known. Advertisements in travel magazines also help achieve the goal of recognition. Many artists mail bright, colorful graphics of their most recent work to gallery visitors who sign guest books and request to receive such brochures. These pamphlets are not just eye catching but they communicate the artist's recent work as well as activities and events taking place at the gallery. Written in a professional, yet poetic style with some vernacular, the voice of the brochure sounds inviting, enthusiastic, and personal. It makes the art seem important and the recipient special. Pamphlets also include travel directions, hours of operation, contact numbers, and in many cases websites. In addition to being mailed to thousands of people, sometimes four times a year, these brochures are placed in visitors centers managed by the city of Mountainville, hotel lobbies, restaurants, and in the galleries themselves. Oftentimes, brochures are given to gallery visitors to remind them of the work they saw and liked, but did not buy. Travel magazines, which may be published four times a year, also contain quarter to full page images of an artist's most recent or most popular work. Accompanying text describes the motivation of the work, and feature articles elaborate on the artist. Magazines are typically mailed to potential tourists by Mountainville's

Chamber of Commerce as well as resort companies. Magazines are also placed in hotel rooms, cabins, and other accommodations giving easy access of information to tourists.

While brochures are believed to be useful by many artists, there are some who cannot afford such advertisements or prefer other strategies. Poking fun at his own lack of aggressive advertising, one artist claimed, “Well we do have a mailing list. We don’t really advertise. We just sit here and hope” (Interview JA).

Location and Setting

Besides having appropriate content in their paintings, the most important strategy artists utilize to minimize economic risk is to select the best location in which to show their art. During interviews, many artists complained about the location disadvantages of their galleries. Not enough traffic, not enough parking, mold problems, and too hidden from view, are some of the most common issues artists raise about their locations. Since many of these artists rent gallery space, they actively consider moving to prime locations if available and affordable. Generally, business owners of all kinds prefer to have retail space in downtown Mountainville. Downtown consists of three linear miles of wall to wall shops, attractions, hotels, and restaurants. To be in the mix of this is to be in the mix of most all of the tourists who come to Mountainville. Nonetheless, there are few galleries located downtown.

During the 1940-1960 tourism boom in Mountainville, art galleries and studio were frequently part of the downtown retail. As rental rates increased, artists could not afford to keep gallery space downtown. Eventually most artists relocated their studios and galleries to a mountainous farming community three miles from Mountainville where a handful of craftspeople had been operating weaving and woodworking businesses out

of their homes since the early 1900s. With cheaper rents, this relocated arts community has grown to include an eight mile loop of approximately one hundred art and craft shops and restaurants. Galleries and shops are located sporadically along this curvy loop. Visitors must either drive or take a city trolley. Sidewalks are virtually non-existent in this community. Beyond the businesses off the main road lie neighborhoods of modern houses occupied by many of Mountainville's residents. These suburban-like neighborhoods are located behind small mountain ridges where they are unseen by tourists exploring the art community.

Despite the separation from the downtown hub-bub, galleries operating in this art community enjoy some advantages. Primarily, galleries and other businesses pool together advertising efforts so that the entire community is promoted as a single attraction. This started early in the community's commercial history when in the late 1930s local craftspeople jointly produced a brochure advertising shops and travel directions to the shops (Arts and Crafts Community Pamphlet; Arts and Crafts Community Museum; Interview KT; Interview CG). As word spread about the arts community, increasing numbers of people came as tourists and as artists/businessmen in the 1960s and 1970s. Artists and craftspeople were particularly attracted to the natural environment and the customer potential from the budding tourism industry in Mountainville.

In 1978 members of the community established the Arts and Crafts Community, a formal arts and crafts organization to protect the community from over-commercialization and over-development. Every retail business within the eight-mile loop is invited to become a member of the organization. Membership requires an annual

fee which goes to pay for a community tourist brochure, among other forms of advertisement. In exchange for the fee, members are listed on the brochure map and given an advertising decal to display in their shops indicating membership to the organization and assuring quality, handmade goods to potential customers. Not all businesses in the art community agree to join the organization, and there seems to be no real consequence for non-membership. Customers still wander into non-member shops.

Charged with more than just promotion and advertising, the arts and crafts organization works to “preserve the integrity of the Craft Community” (Arts and Crafts Community Pamphlet). To preserve the community, organization members worked with the city zoning board and have achieved special craft production status for most of the commercial lots in the eight mile loop. Zoning under craft production requires businesses occupying the space to manufacture 50 percent of for-sale products on site. This zoning restriction supports the hand-made quality of the goods sold locally and prevents over-commercialized shops like T-shirt shops and trinket shops from invading the art community. Even though retailers might profit more from such imported goods, these items compromise the locally handmade quality of the community’s products and the personal quality of the community’s ambience. This zoning configuration is seen as a worthwhile, yet risky compromise in the long-term effect on the community, according to zoning proponents.

Enforcement of zoning, however, is inconsistent and nearly ineffective. Yet, there is public outcry when appeals for zoning codes are made. Violation of zoning laws results in small fines and disapproval from neighboring businesses. Such consequences are not always enough to thwart a handful of businesses who may offer less than 50 percent of

handmade products. Regardless, the majority of businesses located in the art community, especially art galleries, rely on this zoning to protect the quality of goods that makes the community unique in comparison to other tourist shops in the region.

If an artist or gallery owner establishes a business in the arts and crafts community, there are other decisions that may minimize economic risk. Because the majority of artists rent gallery space, the possibility of changing locations presents itself often. During the fieldwork for this project, one large shopping complex was constructed within the arts community and offered additional space for approximately twenty retailers. Since fieldwork for this project was carried out, two more complexes have been built. As businesses move, spaces open up. Moreover, other factors like non-renewed leases, closed businesses, or relocation out of the area contributed to the shifting of gallery locations.

When artists weigh the decision of where to open their gallery business, they consider how close the space is to the road, to other shops, and to the beginning of the art community loop. If a gallery is set back from the road, with no adjacent shops, and half way into the eight mile loop, visitor frequency deeply decreases. Low visitor counts in galleries perceived to be remote are results of limited energy, time, and interest. During this project's survey work, gallery visitors commented anecdotally about their rising levels of exhaustion and disinterest as they continued to visit galleries. Indeed, two days is barely enough to investigate all of the shops in the arts community, let alone all the shops in downtown Mountainville. Therefore, artists who are presented with opportunities to move up the loop closer to Mountainville often do and cite more visitors to their galleries.

Art galleries adjacent to other shops also experience more volume of visitors. This is because a concentration of shops is considered a more efficient use of one's shopping schedule. In a cluster of shops, consumers can hit more shops at once instead of spending a lot of time driving to the next shop. Adequate parking is another consideration for artists selecting a location to maximize exposure of their products. Even though a city trolley does move shoppers around the loop, most people drive and will not stop at shops that do not have parking available.

Once a gallery site has been selected, creating the appearance of the gallery is integral to gratifying the visitor. Galleries located within the arts community are generally picturesque, consistent with historical vernacular architecture, embellished with manicured flowers and gardens, and are decorated seasonally. Several of the gallery spaces resemble cabin structures with log facades and wooden porches. Others are renovated farmhouses, churches, and store fronts. In addition to the outside appeal of a gallery space, signage, used to identify the gallery, attracts visitors. Most signs are wooden with calligraphic lettering, and no signs are neon, flashing, or lit with anything other than dim spotlights.

Given the prevalent appearance of a rural and pioneer architecture, many business owners and retail space developers operate within an aesthetic scheme based on the socio-historical assumptions made about Appalachian material culture. The entire eight-mile loop resembles an agrarian, rural landscape- complete with winding roads, hay pastures, and wooded mountain lots. In many ways, this rural landscape, as it is presented to tourists, is indeed mediated. The historical pioneer appearance of retail space coupled with rural land reconciles the commercial undertones of the community and actually

hides the suburban-esque neighborhoods. The effect is enticing to tourists who desire an experience with a cultural folk that they perceive to be rural, contemporary pioneers, personable, handy, and crafty. Through the strategic efforts of the art community organization to pool advertising resources and to suppress threats of imported and inauthentic products through city zoning laws, artists who select this location are able to potentially minimize their economic risk and sell more art.

Artists and gallery owners are rational agents acting within the structures of a commercial economy led by a globalized tourism industry that offers no guarantees and no certainties of survival. To accommodate the risks perceived in the work conditions in which these artists have chosen to produce, artists utilize a repertoire of strategies and tactics to entice visitors to galleries. Because so many objects are in competition for that space in the tourist's home and for the money that the tourist will pay, artists must utilize these strategies to give their particular product an advantage. The next chapter continues this thread of examination and focuses on the use of ritual, performance, and sacred space to facilitate art sales.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LAST STROKES OF THE BRUSH: RITUAL, PERFORMANCE, AND SACRED SPACE IN ART GALLERIES

The preceding chapter examined strategies that artists and gallery owners¹⁷ in Mountainville employ to attract tourists to galleries in the hope that these visitors buy art. This chapter continues this discussion by describing the actual techniques that gallery workers and artists use in the gallery once they encounter visitors looking at art. Theoretically, this project intertwines political economy with symbolic anthropology. Ritual and meanings (a focus of symbolic anthropology discourse) surrounding gallery art become economic tools by artists used to facilitate the sale of the art (a focus of political economic discourse) within market structures.

Much of the data for this research comes from timed gallery observations I conducted at ten randomly selected galleries and from my participant-observation as a gallery worker. An interviewee invited me to work in one of his downtown Mountainville galleries. Seeing this as a great opportunity to learn about the art business from behind-the-scenes, I accepted his offer, underwent sales training, and worked for a total of five months spread out over the Christmas, summer, and fall seasons. My official title was art consultant, and I was responsible for a portion of the gallery's client relations, client data management, presentation of art pieces, and facilitation of sales. From this vantage point, I learned an immense amount about the effort exerted to attract, engage, and satisfy tourists' demands for art.

¹⁷I use artists, gallery owners, and gallery workers as terms interchangeably to refer to art sellers in this chapter, mostly because all three groups constitute art sellers at one time or another.

Ritual, Performance, and Emotion in the Art Market

This chapter applies to the economic life of the Mountainville art market that which can be described as the social drama of cultural rituals (Geertz 1973; Turner 1974). Social dramas refer to the processes through which artists, gallery workers, and tourists (actors) enter and act within shared spaces of exchange (stage) to experience and express in repetitious behavior (ritual) their personal and social values. This project relies on Victor Turner's explanation of ritual as that "stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests" (Turner 1977:183).

This project also reflects Erving Goffman's work in symbolic interactionism. Goffman used an analogy of the theater to illustrate human social action. As individuals/actors adjust to different settings, they make decisions within scenes, with props and costumes, and in regards to other actors in order to keep coherence in performances of themselves (Goffman 1959). Applying this perspective helps to address the influence the many elements of a gallery experience might have on the actor playing the role of visitor and potential art buyer. Furthermore, Goffman's later work on frame analysis addresses the multiple layers of a scenario that enable the actors "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" occurrences and objects in order to organize the actors' experience, make meaning from the symbols and objects before them, and guide their responses (Goffman 1974). Frame analysis helps to analyze the processes of authentication of art and meanings as they are exhibited in galleries (Milton 1987; Phillips 1997).

From my observation data, I noticed how the interactions between producers and consumers seemed repetitive and staged. As a part of ritual, performances are repeated practices occurring in symbolically bounded space. I also noticed how the gallery spaces were compartmentalized with symbolic meanings and used as the setting in which the scripts of economic exchange were played out (Edensor 1998:62; MacCannell 1976). These repetitive and symbolic elements of ritual and performance facilitate consumption practices. They ease the viewer's interaction with art and the transaction of purchase. The use of cultural ritual and performance theory afforded insight that made the reading of these cultural texts possible.

More recent scholarship within tourism studies use the metaphor of drama to focus on the practices within tourist spaces (Burns 1999; Chaney 2004:195; Coleman and Crang 2002; Crouch 1999; Edensor 1998; Handler 1988). This metaphor centers on the roles of the tourism producers and of the tourism consumers, leading to the view that tourists are active participants in the spaces constructed for them to experience. Modeling the tourist as participant builds on the established paradigm of examining the gaze of the tourist which overlooked any interaction among producers and consumers in the construction of tourist spaces. The theme underlying this application of Appalachian art as ritual is the ordering of experience. Just as a theater performance has actors, audience, and bounded space, so too does one's experience with the art in Mountainville's tourism industry. Through ordered experiences, tourists in Mountainville are ushered in and through galleries and are showered with messages to purchase.

The conditions of the performance are of a commercial nature. Artists are situated within economic and social structures to be producers. They make commodities which

they exchange for profit with tourists, who are the market consumers. As actors in this exchange, or performance, artists and tourists embody and embrace a range of cultural meanings. Icons in the art capture those cultural meanings that reflect both the socio-historical forces that drive their perpetuation, as well as personal meanings attached by the consumer. The underlying economic and social structures of commercialism have conditioned artists to work, produce, and sell and tourists to buy. By engaging in the ritual of exchange, artists and tourists reinforce these conditions and contribute to the normalization of working and going on vacation. These practices of participation in rituals of exchange vary as actors have their own dramatic style.

Once the conditions of the performance are understood to be of a commercial nature and about buying and selling, then the establishment of meanings may be understood. As producers in a commercial market, artists and gallery workers have the main goal of selling art, although many artists will offer other motivations for their work. In order to achieve this goal, artists and gallery workers prompt consumers to make meaning out of the art they view.

Prompting consumers requires invoking emotion. According to Geertz, art is a sensibility; it is more than “formal properties, symbolic content, affective values, or stylistic features” (Geertz 1983:97). The power of art, conditioned by the art’s context, triggers emotional reactions in viewers (Svasek 2007). These emotional reactions “are experiential and interpretational processes” through which a viewer “actively relates to... [his/her] environment” (Heller 1979; Svasek 2007:67). Emotions are stimulated through “discursive practice and embodied experience” and connect to a range of learned and culturally specific reactions to one’s environment (Milton 2005; Svasek 2007: 67). The

range of emotions with which viewers may respond to paintings indicates their own personal background and personal experience. Additionally, this range of emotions provides a reliable set of reactions to which artists and galleries may specifically market their art work. This chapter highlights the performative and the spatial strategies used to engage meaning in the ordered experience of the art object.

Gallery Performances

Greeting and Introduction

The first action an artist or gallery worker performs when a tourist enters the gallery is the greeting. As a gallery worker, I was encouraged to say hello to every gallery visitor. This practice served to welcome the visitor and to confirm his/her presence in the gallery. Because so many people feel alienated from art, they are often shy and apprehensive to enter a gallery. Of course, such alienation does nothing for sales, so gallery workers must ease the transition of the visitor into the gallery space. In my work place, each visitor was assigned an art consultant who would work with that client if and when they returned to the gallery. During the greeting, finding out if the tourist had previously visited the gallery, and subsequently already had an assigned art consultant, was a necessary practice in employee relations.

Along with a friendly and hearty hello, I was also encouraged to recite a brief introduction to the gallery visitor. My spiel went something like:

Welcome to the Artsy Gallery. We have twenty-five different artists represented here, so there is a variety in subject matter and in styles. *Please* take your time to find a favorite image. We have more work upstairs, if you're not too tired from walking around Mountainville. It's nice and quiet up there which might give you a rest from the hustle and bustle outside. So, take your time...enjoy the

beauty...and I'll check in with you to see what favorite image you found, okay? (Fieldnotes).

This introduction told the visitor what they were about to experience, where to go to experience it, and that they should experience it. Besides being informative, it also directed the visitor's encounter with the gallery. Employee training taught me never to ask closed-ended questions or yes/no questions, like "May I help you find something?" Even statements like. "Let me know if you need any help," were discouraged. For new gallery workers, these opening lines seemed normal and something heard in every retail store. These kinds of questions, however, do not intensify the gallery visitor's experience and, in fact, enables the consumer to stop the dialogue with the gallery worker altogether. Once the gallery visitor responds to these paraphrased statements, then it is up to the visitor to reopen dialogue with the gallery worker- and they rarely did this.

Instead, as the quotation above reads, gallery workers were encouraged to end their introduction with an affirmative question. Because most people entering a gallery are relaxed and at leisure, they never say no to a friendly, "okay?," and sometimes do not even realize they have answered at all. Thus, visitors affirming the subtle request by the gallery worker for permission to check on them later reflect the tourist's direct participation in a ritualized exchange. Moreover, this phrasing technique does not conform to the script to which many shoppers are accustomed. Though the retail entrance ritual as gallery workers performed it is new to visitors, it maintains a flow of process through which visitors easily move. As in religious rituals, the performers know what to do next without having to ask.

Although not every gallery I entered had an elaborate welcoming scheme, each one of them had some personnel to greet and encourage visitors to enter and browse. For

artists, it was the window through which visitors' potential to buy was measured and the subsequent effort and attention the artist might invest in the interchange decided. If visitors look harried or distracted, then artists speculated the visitors would not buy, but just glance at what was available. If visitors took their time, then gallery workers began to coax an emotional experience with the art.

Encouraging Connection to the Art

Once visitors take a few minutes to examine the art in the gallery, workers encourage visitors to consider the art further. Questions like, "Did you find a favorite?" and "Where would you put it in your home?" not only engaged the visitor in dialogue with the gallery worker but also enabled the viewer to express their positive experience with a painting. Moreover, asking the visitor where they would put the piece leads the visitor to cognitively skip the point of sale to the after sale and imagine the feel of possessing the art work. Sometimes, art consultants would fuel a desire for upper class status by suggesting the accolades the visitor might receive from guests who see the work in his/her home: "Just imagine all the oohs and aahs you'll get when people see this in your living room!" (Fieldnotes).

Personalizing the Art

In other galleries, artists often personalize their art by emphasizing the reflection of themselves in their art. According to one long-standing artist, art "is all about giving...Giving a part of yourself away" (Interview GW). Artists realize that making a good personal connection with their gallery visitors is as important as producing the right kind of art. As I was observing a female artist interact with her gallery visitors, I noticed that she repeated many of her stories about her animal paintings to different visitors. This

particular artist is very personable and sharing her experiences with the animals or how she personifies them is a part of her performance of selling.

Many artists told me that they believed they could build their client base if their patrons experienced their art work in a personal, friendly, and intimate way.

When the person responds in a very personal way, in an emotional way, or they share something back with me, there's a bonding; there is a relationship there. Those are the kind of clients I want, you know (Interview LM).

We've become very good friends with a lot of our clientele. I mean people we phone, and back and forth, and send cards, and socialize when they're in town... We may go out three or four nights a week, [and] you can't not...[go out] because you've set a precedence, and you've established that relationship with them, and they're important to you. It's a matter of they're not only clients but they become friends, people you enjoy being with, you know, and a lot of them understand during the busy part of the season that... you're going to be too tired to do anything, and that's fine with them. They come in to see the gallery and to see you and see how you're doing. We do a lot of socializing just in the gallery. I mean we actually carry on real true friendships just in the gallery (Interview JA).

I get a real hoot out of somebody that was five years old coming back with their husband and their kids and telling them, you know, it's what I did [painted a picture for them] (Interview GW).

They'll buy from my wife. They'll buy a little bit quicker from me, but if they put somebody in our booth to sell my stuff, they don't do that well at all. They really want to meet the artist. I guess they want to get back and tell their friends, "I met the guy that painted this," or something (Interview LB).

The importance placed on the personal experience of art becomes clear when juxtaposed to the heavy commercial and impersonal relationships many tourists encounter in much of downtown Mountainville retail spaces, and especially in their lives when not on

vacation. Indeed, when artists extend and present their personal sides in the gallery space, whether acted or sincere, tourists feel drawn into the world of the artist. Buying the artist's work helps the tourist to sustain that dimension.

In addition to sharing the personal side of their art, artists often enable the viewer to make his/her own personal connection to the art. This is achieved by painting popular scenes where tourists visit. If artists go a step further and attach a name of a tourist spot to the scene, viewers are more likely to personally connect. Another female artist told me she noticed more people reacting to her paintings by saying, "Oh, I've been there." Having a personal experience at the site the painting depicts persuades the purchase of that painting; thus, demonstrating the significance of naming a place.

Interaction as the Attraction

A key element to making a gallery visit personal for the tourist is jovial, engaging interaction between artist and tourist. Obviously, people on vacation want to have fun and enjoy themselves. Therefore, gallery visits may often incorporate a bit of revelry as recounted by a male artist:

Oh we have a ball. Our customers come in time after time because they have a good time. We laugh and ...drink. Oh yeah we laugh and we just play...We have customers that come in from [the city] all the time, and they stay up at the [hotel] behind us, and about a month ago [a customer] came down the trail carefully balancing two glasses of scotch. And he came in and we laughed and drank scotch and they brought a bunch of friends in the next day with scotch and we laughed and they spent a lot of money and we drank and laughed and had a good time (Interview JA).

Some people who come into art galleries have a certain fascination for the art and for artists (Fieldnotes). Artists tap into this fascination by demonstrating their skill. Many artists post signs, "Artist working today," to invite passersby to enter and watch them

create. In many cases, this poses an opportunity for the artist to give an entertaining performance. A female artist, Gertie, who specializes in animal paintings talked about a recent bear print that she painted while people were visiting her gallery. According to Gertie, they were amazed at how quickly she could change the bear's eye shape to make it look mean or goofy (Fieldnotes). Demonstrating for gallery visitors contributes to the discourse on performance because artists, in the role of the performer, command attention from their gallery visitors, the audience. Working on a painting in front of a gallery audience becomes a performed act and signifies something special. Spotlighting the moment of art production produces the celebrity status of the artist- especially within the cultural mindset that only certain unique individuals are blessed with artistic talent. Because gallery visitors may feel alienated from their own art production, they are awed by the artist who not only possesses the coveted skill, but who proves it right before the visitor's eyes. This performed production also ratifies the personal quality in the connection between visitor and artist.

Embodying Stereotypes

Some artists play out their performance in their attire, usually matching the cultural depictions they create. According to stereotypical images free listed by artists and gallery owners, farm clothing accounts for a common association made of Appalachian people. One artist in particular was dressed in overalls, long-john undershirt, plaid flannel over-shirt with a worn felt hat and boots. He had a scruffy beard, long curly hair and a hole in his pants. This artist intentionally documents in his paintings what he romantically perceives as a disappearing Appalachian culture. He embodies his version of Appalachian culture in his appearance. For visitors to this artist's gallery, seeing this

personal embodiment of his perception of Appalachian culture assures visitors of his sincerity. His performance is legitimated by the community in which he works, as fellow artists often refer customers to his gallery if they inquire about Appalachian art. Still, another gallery owner wears Cherokee cultural artifacts while he works in his Native American art shop. His public appearance debatably links him to Native Americans. Indeed, he may or may not be a member of the Cherokee Nation. The point of his wearing artifacts is that artists embody the cultural perceptions they hold in their art, indicators of perceived authenticity are conveyed to tourists. Such genuineness may be considered a strategy that artists use, deliberately or not, to facilitate sales.

Sharing Knowledge

One role of rituals is to reduce ambiguity by communicating cultural values, rules, and identity to those performing and witnessing the ritual. In the ritualized performances of gallery workers and visitors, information about the artists and their art reduces ambiguity of the consumable product. Sharing stories about artists or informing the viewer of the artist's intentions in the painting are details given by gallery workers that draw the viewer either into the life of the artist and/or the painting itself. Knowledge disclosure has been shown to be a useful byproduct of loyal relationships between art investors and dealers, especially about the virtues of a piece and the background of an artist (Heilbrun and Gray 1993; Plattner 1996). In the case of Mountainville art, knowledge helps to engage the tourist with the art object making way for an emotional experience or a moment of connection between the tourist and artist. Information dissemination is vital for enabling shared visions and shared values between art producer and art consumer.

During my tenure as an art consultant, I worked with many paintings that reflected Christian themes. Telling the viewers of these paintings that the artist was a preacher or that he illustrated books by Christian authors (depending on which artist's work was being viewed) seemed to vindicate the artist's authority to create Christian themed art. Pointing out the artist's details in paintings also drew the viewer in- and sometimes surprised the viewer in an "A-ha" moment. In one particular painting of Jesus on a barren hillside, reproduced into an unlimited number of prints, the artist very subtly fashioned the dark background into a shape depicting the devil. But only after this shape was pointed out, did viewers recognize it as the devil figure. To help focus attention to the background, art consultants dimmed spotlights creating a dramatic effect. Indeed, gallery visitors were so amazed by this painting, they brought friends and family members into the gallery and asked to dim the lights so that the new viewers could experience the attraction (Fieldnotes). Because of the interaction quality of this painting brought about by new knowledge of its message and its contents, it achieved top seller status in the gallery and many of its copies were sold (Fieldnotes).

Sharing knowledge about the content of paintings was an easy tactic to get people to look carefully at paintings. Because people with little exposure to art feel alienated to it, they know to just look at a painting to see what it depicts and then move on to the next image. Such brief interludes with paintings prevent opportunities for viewers to engage a connection to an image. Some artists actually insert hidden images, letters, or number to get viewers to look longer and interact more with their work. If viewers examine a painting to see all of the detailed contents, then they are more likely to learn about it and

express what they value in it; thus, reflecting at the same time, the artist and themselves in the painting.

Two paintings from different galleries illustrate this point. In the first painting, the artist has depicted Mountainville in the 1940s. A few buildings line a rural, dirt road with farm animals in the foreground. The painting really contrasts the actual experience tourists have in Mountainville today. When the gallery worker explained, “That’s a painting of downtown Mountainville before it got all commercialized,” tourists are amazed at the amount of growth and many are saddened from the change. The artist intended to capture a vision of Mountainville’s past, albeit nostalgically, and purchasers of the painting see it as an important reminder of what was (Fieldnotes).

The second painting that means more to viewers, once the artist’s intent is shared, depicts Jesus as muscle-men. Wrestler, motorcycle rider, and other non-traditional forms of Jesus are usually shocking to viewers (Interview SS; Fieldnotes). However, the artist explains these “portrayals of Jesus teach us to expand our thinking of him and to be open to people’s hearts as opposed to their exteriors” (Interview SS). With this new interpretation of the painting, this artist impresses the viewer, connects to their Christian beliefs, and entices them to buy the painting as a reminder of this new perspective.

Moreover, sharing information about the process through which an image was created also helps to create a sense of awe of the artist’s abilities. Tourists in Mountainville were most impressed with gallery paintings of the photo realism style. These images look like photographs. They have remarkably accurate and true to life color palettes and clean, distinct lines which create precise proportion. After initially looking at these paintings, people are usually surprised and do not believe that they are paintings

(Fieldnotes). Explaining the production process, “the artist uses a very small brush and it takes him about three months to paint one image,” proves the medium of the art and vindicates the value of the artist’s skills and the painting’s price (Fieldnotes).

Accommodating Sales

Once a gallery visitor has expressed interest in possessing a painting or print, gallery workers are quick to accommodate any needs or hurdles to finalizing the sale. This aspect of the ritualized performance indicates the flexibility of the performers in transforming the art into a consumed and possessed object. Usually, this flexibility presents size, frame, matte, shipping, and financing options to the customer. During observations in a gallery that sold the work of many artists, a woman wanted a leaf print in a different frame, so the gallery worker called the artist and tried to accommodate the woman’s preference. As a sales consultant, I was trained to ask potential customers what was “holding them back from taking this painting home with them” (Fieldnotes). Specifically asking for this information prepared me to offer appropriate solutions to facilitate the sale.

The bits of data presented in this research illustrate the use of performance as a strategy to minimize artists’ economic risk. Notable are the varied ways these performances manifest. Although there are different scripts to use, the framework for performance is present as gallery workers interact with gallery visitors to sell art. Actors practice roles that encourage the audience to socialize with art objects. These roles include transitioning the audience into the gallery space, providing personal and positive emotional experiences in the gallery space, promoting extended views of the art, embodying cultural stereotypes, sharing knowledge about the art and artist, and

accommodating consumer preferences. While the above section has highlighted the performative practices, the next section provides data of the spatial strategies used to engage meaning in the ordered experience of the art object.

The Gallery Space

From the data collected in gallery observations, patterns of visitor movement within and around galleries become apparent. Galleries are the spatial settings in which the scripts of economic exchange are played out. Spaces within galleries are compartmentalized and associated with symbolic meanings. At the basic level, each gallery has a private and a public space. In private spaces, commercial practices, like money exchange, stock inventory, and tax records are conducted and kept hidden from visitors' view. Keeping these practices hidden de-emphasizes the economic aspect of the art gallery. Instead, visitors are led to see their experience of the art and artist as personal and aesthetic. Public spaces are designated for the movement of gallery visitors in order to fully experience the art (Fieldnotes).

Sacred Space

Several elements within the public space of a gallery are conditioned to create a sense of the art as sacred. Sacred objects are inscribed to be set apart from everyday life because of the feelings of “awe, respect, and reverence” they inspire (Crapo 2003:14,121). As in museums, the sacredness of art potentially reinforces the cultural logic of alienation between art and viewer. Galleries, however, are also markets, and maintaining a relationship of alienation between object and viewer prohibits economic exchange. Indeed, the primary function of the gallery is of an economic nature. Yet, the constructed sacredness of an art object validates the price paid by consumers. Therefore,

the gallery space is made sacred to justify art values without alienating consumers. This argument is based on an examination of techniques that are employed to make gallery space sacred.

To begin, the open space of a gallery is presented as a sanctuary. Relaxing music plays softly and pleasant aromas calm the senses of visitors. Houseplants are used to create a pleasing, organic space, and galleries are filled with natural lighting provided by large windows. Large front windows also act as exhibit space to show the contents of the gallery. In addition to natural light, galleries are equipped with track lighting and spot lights to illuminate particular paintings. In galleries that sell the popular art guru, Thomas Kinkade, light switches are dimmed so that art consultants may demonstrate to the gallery visitor the highlight effect Kinkade puts in his paintings. This demonstration actually makes the art interactive as folks can play with the dimmers to make certain elements of a painting stand out.

Regulating Movement and the Gaze

Like sites of rituals, galleries contain regulated space and direct movement within that space. The purpose of regulating space and movement is to control the gaze of the visitor. Gallery workers do not want visitors to be distracted from their experience with the art. Artists want their customers to see all of the art available for sale. Moreover, moving within the vicinity of art objects, especially when one is surrounded by art, creates an intimate, face-to-face experience- as if one is placed within the frame. This ordered experience minimizes alienation while at the same time creates admiration for the work. Movement is usually guided around the perimeter of a gallery in a circular motion.

Meandering is facilitated by display screens, furniture, plants, and other fixtures that hinder straight courses through the galleries.

The placement of art on the wall also contributes to regulating the gaze of the visitor. Usually, art works are displayed all along the walls of each public room in the gallery. As an art consultant, I learned how to situate paintings of different, but compatible styles, colors, and subjects together on a wall to stimulate the viewer. Looking at the same kind of images with the same style and color palette results in monotony- even if the paintings are awe inspiring on their own. Gallery visitors are presented with enough variety to keep their interest. On the other hand, paintings have to flow from one to the next so that the viewer is not shocked by the difference. For example, the Christian-themed paintings I worked with would never be appropriately placed next to paintings of martini olive caricatures. Moreover, paintings are hung on the wall at average eye level so that they can be examined easily and up close.

Even placement on particular walls affected the viewer's gaze towards paintings. Some galleries have designated "power walls" on which workers hang the artist's best work or an expensive painting. Anecdotally, I was informed that any image place on the power wall would sell quickly. Usually these walls are the focal point that catches the viewer's attention when he/she first enter the gallery.

Spaces within galleries are regulated to help visitors imagine the art work in home-like settings. Often gallery spaces resemble living rooms, dining rooms, or sitting rooms- common house spaces in which art would be exhibited. Sofas, wing chairs, occasion tables, lamps, and fireplace mantles are positioned to create these spaces, recontextualizing a private home space into a public commercialized space. There are no

clocks in gallery spaces, unless they are for sale, to remind visitors of the time. This disability to self-regulate aids the gallery worker in guiding the visitor. Many galleries also resemble cabins, a popular icon of the area as discussed in preceding chapters. In these cases, gallery spaces help to regulate the cultural perceptions associated with the local area.

Regulating Behavior and Reverence

The gallery is a place for tourists to make initial contact with examples of art perceived to be representational of Appalachia, to meet the “real live” artist, and to experience perceived cultural characteristics associated with Southern Appalachia, namely hospitality. Correlating to data presented earlier, stereotypes of friendliness and hospitality prominently operate in tourists’ perceptions of local people. Moreover, these stereotypical behaviors were reportedly encountered by tourists mostly in art and craft galleries. While my observations of artists and gallery workers revealed patterns of interactive and pleasurable performance, my observations of tourists moving through galleries revealed patterns of active and regulated audience behavior (Fieldnotes).

Because galleries display their art commodities hanging on walls, galleries resemble museums. Indeed, tourists often mistake galleries for museums. Such a connotation produces an estranged reaction in tourists who despise museums. According to one gallery owner, “We’ve had people, more than...I can count three or four times...that people looked in the door and said, ‘We don’t want to see no museum’” (Interview JA). This presents a contradiction I observed in galleries where art is introduced as something approachable and personal on one hand and as something sacred

and admired on the other. Both positions of this contradiction, however, help to make the art object valuable, from different vantage points, to the buyer.

Museums are not attractive to some because museums may seem boring and stark. Sometimes experiences with art housed in a museum may lead to feelings of discomfort and confusion. Despite tourists' feelings towards museum, they know that reserved, formal behavior is expected in museum spaces. The similarity perceived between galleries and museums informs tourists to behave quietly and calmly with reverence and respect. Children are told by parents to not touch anything and are reprimanded if they act out. Proximity to paintings is initially minimized, unless the gallery worker invites the viewer to look closer (Fieldnotes). In some galleries, signs remind visitors what kind of behavior is expected. "No food or drinks," and "Children must be accompanied," indicate the controlled and regulated demeanor of visitors (Fieldnotes).

Conversation between some gallery workers and visitors is always friendly, but also routine and composed of typified remarks about how one is doing, where one is from, and the weather. Artists are expected to be friendly and cheerful. One female artist recounts how this expectation affected her:

This is hospitality industry...I had to learn to force myself to say hello to people when they came in...I had to learn that skill, to be friendly to strangers (Interview JS).

Tourists, however, are not obligated to be friendly. In fact, some artists and gallery workers notice some tourists to behave in a manner likened to zombies. Such behavior goes beyond the desired effect of revering the art. These visitors suffer from sensory overload and are so inundated with the ritual of gazing, that they do it without thinking or realizing, or responding to artists' greetings. They are truly passive in the act of viewing.

I prefer to term this behavior “Museum Mode” because it seems to occur after tourists have spent too much time at once examining art in the galleries.

Reverence for paintings in galleries is cultivated during a tourist’s visit. Western culture generally has a high regard for objects deemed as art work. Much cultural dialogue has contemplated what criteria provide for this high status, or snobbery of art (Marquis 1991). Reflecting such cultural reverence is the pattern of length of examination a viewer affords art pieces. If a tourist entering a gallery has successfully undergone the transition into the art space without distraction, and has been regulated to engage in the art, he/she responds by lingering his/her gaze on each piece. I noticed in some galleries the rhythm of viewing punctuated every ten seconds with a side shuffle to the next painting.

Reverence for the art object is also expressed by responding emotionally to a painting. Emotions were demonstrated through facial gestures, a sudden change in viewing behavior, body movements, and verbal expressions (Fieldnotes). Emotion is shown throughout this research to be a major component in the process and practices of the economic exchange of art. Emotion also serves to measure how much one respects a painting.

As an art consultant, I witnessed deep emotional reactions in visitors. Boxes of tissues were available throughout the gallery in case someone was moved to tears by the beauty, the awe, the patriotism, the humility, etc., as captured by the artist in the painting and read by the viewer (Fieldnotes). Many artists attempt to engage the viewer’s emotion with their art. One artist explains, “I want my work to be seen and enjoyed, and I want it to intrigue people, and I want it to inspire people. I want it to give them that feeling of

creation, in themselves. I want them to feel that” (Interview MP). Emotional responses that indicate reverence for art may be either positive or neutral comments. That the art piece garners any serious effort by viewers to think about a response to it indicates its level of importance. Gallery visitors often purchased paintings that would enable them to replicate such emotional experiences at home (Fieldnotes).

Mystification of the Artist

In addition to reverence for the art, regulated tourist behavior in galleries also reflects reverence for the artist. One of the artists I interviewed reflected on the status she felt was bestowed upon artists. She comments, “Most people are mystified by artists, it’s something I discovered, maybe in junior high, that people treat you different if you’re an artist...like you’re somebody special, because they’re not artists” (Interview JS). This artist feels she experiences this same “mystified” reaction when her gallery visitors realize she is the one who created the paintings at which they are looking (Interview JS; Fieldnotes). Another artist, commenting on the perceived status he experienced, told me that “tourists assume artists are well-traveled and wealthy” (Fieldnotes).

Field observations of visitor behavior in galleries as well as conversations carried out with visitors during gallery visitor surveys led me to interpret that many tourists denote specialness with an artist. Anthropologist Marushka Svasek connects this reverence for artists to the “myth of artists as creative geniuses” (Svasek 2007:89). When I saw a gallery visitor meet the artist, the visitor seems charmed and excited (Fieldnotes). Depending on the reaction his/her work receives, some artists are granted celebrity-like status- as is the case for Thomas Kinkade who draws several hundred people to his public exhibits and talks.

Indeed, one of the strategies for galleries exhibiting many artists is to host a reception in their honor. This allows gallery patrons to mingle with the artist and, in a sense, creates a hero of the art world. This tactic is not employed by galleries which are owned/ operated by and exhibit one artist since he/she is usually at the gallery daily. Nor is this tactic to generate gallery visits as effective as other tactics since invitations go out to tourists who may not be in Mountainville for the event. On the other hand, some tourists arrange special trips to Mountainville to meet a particular artist (Fieldnotes). Moreover, gallery visitors who feel very connected to an artist through his/her work send gifts or notes to express their appreciation (Interview SH; Interview GW; Interview SS; Fieldnotes). Even if a visitor is not familiar with a particular artist, if he/she is demonstrating in a gallery, visitors behave with more respect, give more attention, and express awe because of the artist's presence.

Sometimes tourists looking at several art pieces in a gallery will find a piece that they believe they could produce themselves. Commenting, "I can do that!" indicates a lack of appreciation and/or understanding for the effort the artist has exerted. As an art consultant/salesperson, I observed this reaction as often as once a week (Fieldnotes). Especially if the price value of said painting is high, viewers may think the artist is trying to deceive them by charging what the viewer may see as a disproportionate amount of money for the effort the artist put into the creation of the art object (Fieldnotes). In this case, the artist will most likely not lose his/her celebrity status, although his/her work may not be sold. Instead, the very act of the viewer viewing the art enough to react indicates reverence, respect, and value for the artist.

At every moment in the ritualized and ordered experience in an art gallery, visitors are being measured and sized by gallery workers who hope to make a sale. How a visitor moves, the speed, who accompanies them into the gallery, how distracted or mummified they seem are details that matter to the gallery worker. Surprisingly, physical appearance does not factor into the workers' assessment as much as behavior. Gallery workers learn quickly in their training not to judge any visitor by outer signs in their appearance. They are taught to read behavior exhibited by visitors. Specific behaviors gallery workers look for include speed of body movement, the amount of focus a viewer might give towards a painting, and verbal reactions. Based on their reading, gallery workers consider how much effort they should invest in interaction with the visitors.

Many of my co-workers believed that they never persuaded someone who did not want to buy art into buying a piece. Most of them saw themselves as providing a service to tourists who had already made up their mind, but just needed some help. This particular perspective takes the guilt away from the manipulation at work in the galleries. Artists and gallery workers are not sneaky or deceitful. Rather, they employ a toolkit of strategies, tactics, and social skills to facilitate sales.

Setting the Stage for Repeat Visits

After the visit to the gallery and after sales have been facilitated or not, there are few lingering rituals performed that aim to bring the visitor back to the gallery. These rituals help to ensure repeat business. At some point during the gallery worker's performance, name and contact information about the client will be requested. If the visitor agrees, he/she is added to a mailing list. In my position, I was encouraged to enter comments about the painting preferences the visitor expressed in a database. This

database had potential to sort visitors according to their aesthetic tastes and target them for particular artists, events, and sales. In many galleries, business cards containing the web address of the gallery were disseminated. Although not common in the galleries I visited, sales did occur over the internet. In my experience as an art consultant/sales person, art buyers wanted to see the image in person before committing to purchase, as well as frame and matte options. Nonetheless, the internet enabled sales rituals to extend beyond the physical interaction of artist and tourist.

Consequences of the performed rituals and regulated space are either positive or negative, with negative consequences resulting in no sales and/or no repeat visit. If visitors do not like their gallery experience, they usually do not return. Based on gallery workers' accounts and visitor logs kept by many galleries, visitors to these particular galleries usually do return (Fieldnotes). When asked for the motivation for visiting one particular gallery, a tourist commented, "We have several of [this artist's] paintings at home" (Fieldnotes). Some visitors go to galleries based on what they have heard about the artist's works. Reputation and word of mouth factor in a lot of business for some galleries.

We've never really had to advertise a whole lot because it's always been word of mouth...and not just from our clients, or tourists, but from other galleries in the art and craft community. If someone's looking for something like what we do, they'll [other galleries] say, oh you have to go to the RJ Gallery (Interview JA).

Another consequence of successfully performed gallery sales includes positive reactions. Feedback allows for the evaluation of the performance and regulated space, as well as the art product.

We get a lot of feedback. People will come back in and say, “Oh my God we got this and everybody comments and we just love it.” And often people will send me photographs of where they’ve hung my paintings, and they’ll come in time and time and time again and say how much they still enjoy it [the gallery experience] (Interview JA).

Feedback expressed in consumer behavior in the gallery also provides artists and gallery owners to informally evaluate their business health. One artist used the volume of note card sales as an indicator of his business. He claims that, “I really thought those [note cards of his work] would sell. I’ve sold three in the last two weeks, and I should be selling more in the neighborhood of eight to ten a day” (Interview MP).

Positive feedback and repetitive gallery visits often lead to developed friendships between artist and tourist. Such relationships indicate the personal interaction that artists provide and stimulate with gallery visitors. Attesting to this consequence of successful gallery performances, one artist claims, “We’ve become very good friends with a lot of our clientele. I mean people we phone, and back and forth, and send cards, and socialize when they’re in town” (Interview JA). In fact, some gallery visitors even become collectors (Interview LR; Interview CG; Interview GW).

This chapter highlights the performative and the spatial strategies used to engage meaning in the ordered experience of the art object. Accessing meaning through codes placed in art images, through codes expressed in gallery rituals of artist actors and tourist audience, and through codes assigned to gallery spaces, facilitates engagement between consumer and art. Engaging with art yields emotional attachment or expression and stimulates the tourist to consume. As elements of ritual, the actors, the performance, the regulated space, the sacred objects, and the audience participation are repeatedly played

out as economic strategies. Strategies utilized by artists and gallery workers contribute to their survival or their success in the competitive tourism industry.

CHAPTER NINE

HANGING IT ON THE WALL: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This project focuses on the use of stereotypes in regional art of North America. The research question that initiated this project is how culturally distinctive would the local people and place be without the use of cultural stereotypes in local economic, politics, and social life. As the research progressed, questions about the perpetuation of stereotypes emerged, and linkages between the prevalence of stereotypes and the perception of cultural difference were made. Ultimately, this project asks how within the tourism industry, as an extension of the flows of people and goods of globalization, art with stereotypic content serves to assert the perceived uniqueness of local culture. “Perceived” uniqueness is underscored since evidence of tourist art made attractive, according to consumers’ tastes, does not signify any altering of structures, logic, customs or beliefs of the cultural system from which it is produced.

This project challenges and deconstructs notions of cultural distinctiveness associated with the Appalachian region, while showing some cultural icons to be important to the identity formation of artists and tourists. This project also reveals the ways dominant cultural assumptions, like racial and class categories as well as experiences with the past, are communicated via art images. This project shows how the tourism industry affects cultural perceptions of marginalized groups as well as how individuals and communities employ strategies to survive in a tourism context. My goal in this project is not to resist the perpetuation of stereotypes but to see the underlying structures that enable their persistence.

Fieldwork for this project was conducted in Mountainville, a Southern Appalachian tourist destination and small town adjacent to a popular national park. This

field site is fully introduced in Chapter Three. My research was conducted in the town of Mountainville because it relies solely on a tourist economy, and it has a proportionally high number of artists allowing for the opportunity to see visual representations of Appalachian culture. This project suggests that without stereotypical icons at play in the tourism industry, Mountainville is not culturally distinct from American cultural locales.

My literature review (Chapter Two) discusses work from consumption studies that address the processes and creative capacity of consumption. Acknowledging the capacity to assign and reassign objects with meanings during consumption practices leads to a discussion of authenticity of tourist art. Literature examining the authenticity of tourist arts recognizes the conflicting values between the representations of culture and personal meanings towards such representations. A key part of the process of consumption of art is the point at which tourists and artists engage emotionally and experientially with meanings and symbols. Because of this emotional factor, I briefly discuss the anthropology of emotion literature, and I review literature about ritual. The discourse on ritual becomes pertinent in order to see how meanings and images and symbols are structurally experienced and reproduced emotionally by the ordering of space and narration within galleries.

Research data collected during this project defines a body of cultural images used in a regional tourist site and reveals connections between these images and regional cultural stereotypes. I conducted a systematic content analysis in randomly selected galleries in Mountainville and its surrounding area to discern what kinds of icons were being painted. Statistically, buildings, landscapes, and wildlife were the most prominent images with cabins, churches, barns, mountainscapes, river scenes, flowers, and black

bears the most common icons. Fully described in Chapter Five, there is a lot more variety in subject matter of the art produced and consumed in this area than I expected. There are also a lot more artists living and working in the field site that create their art pieces within the narrow range of subject matter than I initially observed. This project catalogued 450 paintings and prints and sorted them into seven subject categories. With few exceptions, images are stylized realistically and romantically such that the depicted subjects are clearly discernable and portrayed in ideal forms.

Also in Chapter Five, I review some bits of research conducted in North America and Appalachia that examine the complexity of social categories. The review of this literature is schematic and brief only to highlight the postmodernist efforts to deconstruct stereotypes and to acknowledge the heterogeneity of and within social categories and place, especially what it means to be “Appalachian.” I think it helps to set the stage for what I call “The authentication of seemingly inauthentic meanings.”

I also conducted interviews with artists, gallery owners and managers, and community members to help answer questions about the kinds of images produced in paintings that might be used to visualize Appalachian culture as well as images of Appalachian stereotypes. When compared to the patterns of subjects illuminated by the content analysis, I noticed a strong correlation with the lists of cultural stereotypes and images generated by artists. Further comparisons of these patterns of subjects to the tourists’ conceptions of Appalachian culture derived from the tourist surveys show a similar correlation. Moreover, these perceptions of Appalachian culture are mutually related to a history of Appalachian stereotypes created and reproduced in public media formats like literature, film, and television.

By examining the history of media representations of Appalachia (in Chapter Six), this research shows connections between images present in Mountainville art and images projected to American audiences by popular media formats. Stereotypes about personality or character traits, like self-reliance, self-survival, simple life, and strong family values, have been used by popular media formats to talk about and describe the Appalachian region for the last three hundred years. I was not surprised then that, set against such a cultural backdrop, many people (including residents and visitors) in Mountainville talked about the area in nostalgic tones and expressed their affinity for what they perceived to be a simpler, self-sufficient, Appalachian lifestyle- which they were able to experience in varying degrees of success through Mountainville's tourist attractions. Nonetheless, research observations and anecdotes of this talk are evidence of the manifestation of social structures (national public media) at work in the shaping of individuals' ideas and perceptions of a place and people.

The structural backdrop developed by the historical use of images of Appalachia reproduces the normalcy of these stereotypes, even though stereotypes are acknowledged by many consumers (artists and tourists) not to be accurate or representative of Appalachia or of Mountainville itself. The "authenticity" of stereotypes is an entity measured differently and to differing degrees depending on the criteria of the measurer. This research finds that consumers value stereotypes because they have been enculturated, or taught, to read specific meanings in stereotypes, which then contributes to the ordering of their social experiences, signifies group identity and sense of belonging, and expresses individual identity and preference. Stereotypes help make sense of the consumer's world. Given the weight stereotypes carry in the consumer experience,

images that carry connotations of them seem appropriate, even essential, by artists and tourists alike, to exist in Mountainville's art market, especially as possess-able forms of what is contrived as the Mountainville experience.

Interviews with artists and gallery managers further generated an assortment of reasons as to why these images are available in Mountainville's art market. Primary reasons are the personal motivations of artists to create depictions of subjects they sincerely enjoy painting. All of the artists participating in this research reported affinity for some element of the mountain environment, whether that element is a log cabin, wildflowers, or bears. In addition to personal satisfaction found in painting these stereotypical subjects, some artists sincerely try to connect to a potential art buyer, and paint elements of the mountain environment that the artist thinks the buyer would prefer. Most gallery managers selected paintings for exhibition for this reason. Still other images were created to connect to Mountainville's past and to perpetuate the historiography of Mountainville's past. Artists painting under this motivation saw the purpose of their work to document and record what they determined was Mountainville's changing landscape and culture.

After establishing the body of icons produced and consumed in Mountainville's art market, I critically examine the functions of icons in the local tourism industry. This research suggests that icons are used to advertise place, to structure experience of that place, and to enable the emotional and intellectual possession of that place through souvenirs. Interviews with city officials and observations of tourist attractions confirm that the cultural icons of mountains, wilderness, log cabins, black bears, and pioneer people are used to attract visitors to the city. Television commercials, billboards, and

radio spots running in metropolitan markets within a half day's drive from Mountainville contain icons of mountain vistas, black bears, and pioneer life. Most importantly, these icons shape and reflect the actual experiences of tourists in and around the national park. These are not the only characterizations used to promote the city, however. Pamphlets distributed throughout the country advertise and promise experiences with local tradition, family values, and adventure.

Such advertising techniques are a part of a tool kit of strategies involved in the production and dissemination of characterizations and images for the purpose of generating business. Marketing is carried out by city ad campaigns as well as by individual business owners including artists and gallery owners. Artists and gallery owners described to me the variety of ways they sought to attract customers to their shops. I learned of a repertoire of marketing techniques, and in Chapter Seven explain how these techniques help to minimize artists' and gallery owners' sense of economic risk while generating sales. Painting particular scenes and content that connected to tourists' vacation experiences as well as tourists' personal experiences is a primary marketing technique. Locating a business in a high traffic area with clear and attractive signage works to bring visitors to the galleries, as do pamphlets, television commercials, and mass mailings of artists' recent works. Once visitors are lured to enter the gallery, techniques meant to engage the visitor with the art are employed by gallery workers. Diversified pricing, contemporary color palettes, and poetic titles help to persuade visitors to purchase art work.

During my research observations, I was most surprised by the use of performance and ritual in the galleries to engage visitors with the art and with the artist. These

performances, detailed in Chapter Eight, are facilitated by artists and/or gallery workers over and over again and within decompartmentalized spaces of the gallery. Interviews with artists, gallery owners, and gallery workers corroborated my observations of ritualized performance and furthered my understanding of the strategies used to attract visitors to the galleries and facilitate sales. The most important technique to facilitate a sale of art is to make the feelings, perceptions, and meanings the viewer associates with local Mountainville people and places connect to the content of the paintings. Ritualized performances and retail “scripts” offer information about the gallery, the artist, and the painting that often stir an emotional reaction in the viewer. Within the capacity for the creation and generation of meanings laden in consumption processes, viewers are guided by gallery workers, often with the help of dimmed spotlights, to connect their experiences, their values, and their identities to the art work in ways that make the art work special, valuable, and necessary for the viewer to possess.

In addition to learning about the processes of consumption and marketing techniques from artists and gallery owners, I was given the opportunity to record snapshots of their life histories. From interviews with artists and gallery owners, I was amazed at each one’s unique story and how they each came to producing and selling art in Mountainville. To achieve the level of ethnography, this project gives voice to artists and gallery owners who share what it means to them to be working in a tourism industry. I presented a few of their voices in Chapter Four and synthesized what I learned specifically from them. Their stories connect to other themes in the dissertation.

Despite the variations in the collection of artists’ histories and life experiences, a connecting theme lies in their roles as consumers of those images that have come to

connote Appalachian place and culture. Artists, like the tourists they paint for, live in a cultural context that positions them to consume icons of Appalachia. Even though these icons, like mountains, trees, cabins, barns, and black bears, might hold personal value to an artist, many artists depict such icons in art work because the icons have evolved into normalized and appropriate representations of that which signifies Appalachia. Artists may or may not be critical of such representations. The point is that these icons are selected actively by artists and other image makers in the same way that tourists consider which souvenir to choose to purchase. As consumers, artists act out the creativity capacity inherent in the consumption process. Iconic stereotypes are perpetuated, not because of their depiction of local place and people, but rather because they are a part of a body of symbols from which artists acting as consumers may select in order to signify that which is perceived as “Appalachian” or that which artists perceive as reflections of their own aesthetic and personal identities. Thinking of artists as consumers is a notable contribution of this research.

Of course, tourists were the initial consumers to be identified in this research. I conducted surveys with tourists in order to gather information about why they come to Mountainville, what they know about Appalachia, what they experience during their stay in Mountainville, and what they find appealing about the art, and what reasons they have for purchasing it. The emphasis on the tourist is critical to understanding why some cultural icons are preferred while other images of the local are excluded from the body of appropriate tourist art symbols. Talking with Mountainville tourists while they visited art galleries and conducting surveys of tourists’ shopping experiences provided me the opportunities to learn what tourists’ generally understood and expected to encounter

about Appalachian culture. Underlying this emphasis on tourists is the premise that tourists are key actors involved in the ritualized system of tourism exchange.

Although I exerted effort to investigate the tourist's perspective, I found this task to be the most difficult challenge in my research. My running joke was that "There is no one as busy as a tourist on vacation." In fact, I was declined several times by visitors who had to hurry back to their hotel to take a nap or to eat. Nonetheless, the information I gathered from these surveys became useful snapshots and anecdotes that supported my claim that people are not necessarily duped into believing stereotypes of Appalachia. Rather, these stereotypes hold personal and experiential meanings which motivate a person to consume images that contain them.

This point is captured by what I call a "conundrum of authenticity." The conundrum I refer to describes the varying levels of authenticity associated with the paintings for sale in Mountainville. On one hand, cultural icons employed in art are considered authentic to individuals who find these icons to mean something personal to them. On the other hand, these same cultural icons may not be judged authentic by certain viewers because they believe the icons do not represent local populations, landscapes, or culture.

Perhaps the most significant outcome of this research is to indicate and describe the varying levels of authenticity associated with paintings and those meanings attached to the images the paintings contain. In the art market of Mountainville, many images of Appalachia are stereotyped and misrepresent lived experiences. Yet, these images hold real significance for people who connote personal value, identity, and experience to the images. Some artists paint stereotypical images according to what they think the market

demands. Other artists paint these images because of personal passion for their subjects. Most artists give reasons as to why they paint certain subjects that are not purely economic or symbolic. They paint what is around them and what they know, what they feel moved by, as well as what they believe will be purchased.

Tourists buy this art because it relates to their positive emotions, their personal and/or class identity, their personal sentiments, and their experiences. Subjects are often purchased because they are immediately experienced by the tourist. Such subjects are what are around the tourist and what the tourist has just known because of his/her vacation experience. Tourists consume subjects that signify and resonate with enculturated perceptions about culture and place. Other tourists purchase stereotypical images because the market limits their choices. These consumers settle for an image that satisfies their preferences enough to purchase it, but perhaps not as much as an image they might imagine or be looking for. Which motivation is authentic, and in what form? Prints are copies of original paintings, but prints contain the same stimulating and moving image and make it affordable.

Furthermore, images painted by artists and purchased by tourists connect to cultural processes of consumption. Sometimes people buy a thing because they like it or it triggers a memory or even a value preference. In other instances, people buy things because shopping is an appropriate and expected activity, not just to demonstrate one's class and status to the folks locally and back home, but also to demonstrate one's ability to bargain hunt. There is a plethora of outlet malls in the county, and the style of shopping that these markets promote is sometimes carried over in the arts and crafts shops. In these cases, cultural icons are consumed less for the meanings they specifically

embody and more because they dominate a market in which the kinds and contents of souvenir and art items available are limited.

The process of consumption becomes more complicated when the commodities available to tourists have to compete with other vacation expenses as well as other objects previously acquired and in use back home. In other words, an art object, in order to be consumed, has to possess whatever combination of personal meaning, exchange value, uniqueness, and appropriateness that tourists demand, or that the market enforces. It seems to be the combination of the object itself, the meanings assigned to object from both artist and viewer, and the ritualized experience between the producer and consumer that facilitate the successful exchange of the art object in the tourism economy.

These variations of meanings are referred to as a conundrum of authenticity because any interpretations of the significance of Mountainville art could not be succinct and congruent. The puzzle is left unsolved. “Authenticity” is a process of negotiation, and, like a text, is to be read and interpreted. The range of values measuring the authenticity of art in Mountainville’s tourist market depends on many factors, including market forces, cultural perceptions, personal experience, and identity. This dissertation explores these factors in order to interpret how and why certain icons are consumed in tourist art. The conundrum of authenticity presents the opportunity to explore vast and richly articulated perceptions of what it means to be an artist, to be a vacationer, to be a resident of Mountainville and of Appalachia, to make a living, to relax, to behold beauty, and to relive nostalgia.

The lessons learned in this project include an understanding of the kinds of images consumed in an Appalachian tourist art market, of the marketing techniques

employed to facilitate the consumption of images, of the myriad of meanings expressed by consumers through images, and of the structural ways individuals are taught to associate certain meanings with images. Through social structures engaged in national politics, international economics, and regional history, icons serve to organize the ways populations are thought about. Because of our human propensity to rely on categories of things and persons to order our world, populations go misrepresented. Furthermore, the variations of cultural systems, knowledge and world views, often result in populations being misunderstood. Thus, the projection of cultural difference plaguing Appalachia reflects contrived notions of culture. Being of a contrived nature leaves open the possibility of changing and correcting such notions. In Appendix F, I suggest applications of this research that may contribute to discussions about “authenticity” and tourism.

This project has brought to light the disconnections existing between the lived reality of cultural structures and meanings and the expression of culture as influenced by market demands within a tourism industry. The analogy of Mountainville as a carnival was repeatedly mentioned to me during field research, as were comparisons between Mountainville, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and other popular tourist destinations. The conclusion that Appalachian culture is not remarkably different from American mainstream was reinforced by data collected in project interviews, observations, surveys, and participant-observation that suggest residents and tourists see Mountainville as any other tourist destination or event.

In spite of this, Mountainville is a popular tourist destination. How can the city attract millions of people if it does not offer an experience of some quality of difference? Certainly, its proximity to a national park serves as a basis for Mountainville’s allure, but

not everyone travels to the park. Perhaps, the lure is the sheer number of tourists themselves. In this case, tourists serve as their own attraction. While these factors may help to explain why Mountainville draws such an annual crowd, this research suggests that the use of stereotypes penetrating the Mountainville landscape has a far greater impact. Without stereotypical icons at play in the tourism industry, Mountainville would not be perceived as culturally distinct from other American cultural locales. With stereotypes, Mountainville achieves the allure of a place and a people different enough for the tourist to experience.

The goal of this project is not to challenge the perpetuation of stereotypes but to see the foundation for their persistence. To understand the perpetuation of stereotypes, this research concludes with two motives for their persistence: stereotypes make a place seem different and stereotypes bear valuable meanings for consumers. Stereotypes permeate Mountainville through art images, as well as through a range of souvenirs, storefronts and signs, commercial architecture, lodging and dining spaces, and street performers and mascots in order to make Mountainville seem different. Images of stereotypes are used purposefully in varying degrees by business owners, city officials, tourism developers, artists, and gallery owners to promote a sense of cultural uniqueness and to promise tourists experiences with different people, place, and objects. Attracting enough tourists ensures the support for livelihoods couched in a tourism industry. The town sees a need to seem different so that tourists will deem it worthy of the interest, time, energy, and money they allot for their vacation experience.

Mountainville is not remarkably different, yet the illusion of difference is achieved by the immensity of stereotypes encountered by consumers. This projection of

difference is well received by consumers because of the values consumers have for the meanings denoted by images of stereotypes. Whether they are cultural or personal, economic or symbolic, or class-based or experiential, the meanings expressed in and through images evoking Appalachian stereotypes stimulate and compel connections and associations between a place, its people and its culture, and the consumers who perceive it so.

APPENDIX A

Discussion and Critique of the Frankfurt School on Authenticity

This discussion and critique of the Frankfurt School's view toward the consumption of art in mass culture is important because it insinuates a conundrum of authenticity I observed in the field. Additionally, the Frankfurt School proves useful to this research of the consumption power of the tourism industry by examining the effects of mass culture as an agent of social control.

Writing in the first half of the twentieth century, the Frankfurt School was critical of the dominating capitalist structures disseminated through music, television, movies, and cultural artifacts. They believed that capitalism produced non-democratic culture that was devoid of the freedoms and reason which would have enabled non-conformity (Adorno 1970; Arato and Gebhardt 1977; Benjamin 1936; Bottomore 1984; Horkheimer 1941; Marcuse 1964; Brosio 1980). In other words, mass culture does not reproduce free agents acting out their choices. Becker's study is a prime example of women weavers who are compelled to reproduce repeated textile designs if they are to succeed in the market (Becker 1998).

There was some disagreement between Adorno and Benjamin as to the usefulness of mass culture with Benjamin considering the revolutionary aspects of the mechanical reproduction of culture which destroyed the elitist aura of art (Benjamin 1936; Bottomore 1984:19). The Frankfurt School was concerned that through capitalism's control of production and distribution, consumption was also controlled. Needs and wants were shaped and made rational by corporations as individuals were robbed of their human potential and made as consumers. Marcuse named this "one dimensional status quo" because it eroded individualism (Brosio 1980; Marcuse 1964). Indeed, the Frankfurt School saw people as perceiving things only in the forms and functions that are given, made, and used in existing society. Consumers are not conditioned to be critical of the cultural objects available to them. Thus, society is reproduced in the mind, consciousness, and senses of its social members, and "restricts the possibilities for the emergence of an authentically free person" (Brosio 1980:36).

The legacy of the Frankfurt School is noticeable in critiques of power relations embedded in economic structures of the culture industry. However, the Frankfurt School itself is critiqued for paying no attention to the varying degrees of individual agency and consumer choice available in industrial capitalist markets (Nealon and Irr 2002:3). Although consumers may be bound by the logic established in the market, they do assess and evaluate according to their personal logic. This may not be enough use of their agency to be considered critical consumers, but recognizing such efforts is key to cultivating a more critical and democratic consumer. By examining market strategies used by capitalist enterprises to produce culture, by critiquing cultural artifacts, and by assessing the effects of such artifacts on audiences, consumers may be enabled to "resist media manipulation" and work towards alternative market choices and the prevention of fetishized culture (Kellner 2002:50,52; Szeman 2002:74).

APPENDIX B

Interview Schedule

Artists and Gallery Coordinators/Owners:

1. Please describe how you spend your time. Include activities you do for work, for fun, for family, etc.
2. Please describe how did you came to producing art (or managing a gallery) in Mountainville? What other jobs have you had? Where else have you lived?
3. What kinds of things do you paint? Why do you paint these things? Do you portray any specifically local objects or scenes?
- 3a. What kinds of subjects do the paintings you carry in your gallery depict? What styles of painting do you exhibit?
4. How would you describe your personal painting style? How did you develop your artistic style? How would you like to be remembered by art historians?
5. What in your artistic background? Did you receive any formal training? What or who influenced you to be an artist?
6. Please describe the process under which you go to paint. What motivates you to choose and represent subjects? Do you ever paint in alternative styles or represent your subject differently or experimentally?
- 6a. Please describe the process under which you select a particular artist or painting to sell in your gallery? What criteria do you require for artists and their paintings?
7. What kinds of responses do your paintings receive? What kinds of reactions do you wish your paintings received?
8. What business strategies do you employ to market your art, or to get it in public view?
9. How many people do you employ? Please describe the production process of your painting and prints, from start to finish. Be sure to describe each employee's role.
10. Please describe what kind of patrons purchase your art. Are they tourists, local people, family and friends?
11. Who would you like to purchase your art?
12. Do you know how your art is used once it leaves this gallery?

Appendix B, continued

13. What kind of feedback do you get from your patrons? Do you incorporate this feedback in your work? Please describe.
14. What do you think is the difference between art and souvenir? Is your creation art or souvenir? What do you think your patrons consider your creation to be?
15. What stories accompany this painting?
16. Describe how your gallery financially performs in the tourism industry. What are your gallery's volume of sales?
17. What changes have you noticed in Mountainville's tourism industry?
18. Do you think Mountainville is unique? Is it a unique tourist destination? Is it culturally unique?
19. What issues are important to business owners here in Mountainville? What kind of city do business owners want Mountainville to be? Describe the city government's current role in economic policies and how would you like this role to change?
20. Please describe your perceptions of Appalachian culture. Do you identify with Appalachian culture? Please explain.
21. Please list as many Appalachian culture stereotypes as you can. Do you incorporate any of these in your paintings?
22. Do you think Mountainville promotes elements of Appalachian culture to attract tourists?

APPENDIX C

Free Lists of Stereotypes and Icons

Categories of Stereotypes used to analyze the free lists generated by interview participants are listed below in the order of most frequency to least frequency of responses pertaining to the category. Examples of responses provided by interview participants follow category titles.

Please list as many Appalachian culture stereotypes as you can.

Character/Personality Traits

independent, neighborly, helpful, friendly, sharing, kind, gentle, hardworking, satisfied, honest, resourceful, proud, patriotic, lazy, stubborn, racist, feuding, boring

Material Landscape

porches, trucks, guns, wood houses, grits, moonshine stills, whiskey, wagons

Non-Educated

ignorant, inarticulate, uneducated, non-educated, high school dropout, backwards, lack of sophistication, eating road kill, inability to communicate

Isolated

isolated, backwoods, private, not open to outsiders, standoff-ish, distrustful

Traditional

non-modern, historical, people living in the past, church gathering, God fearing, primitive, plain folk, simple, take care of their own, conservative, behind time and trends

Body Image

bad teeth, no teeth, barefoot, corn cob pipe, funny old hat, no shoes, overalls, long beards, accent, pregnant, dirty

Caricature

hillbilly, mountain people, redneck, misrepresented

Poverty

poor, government support, poverty, broke

Environmental Landscape

mountains, property conscious

Appendix C, continued

Categories of Images/Icons used to analyze the free lists generated by interview participants are listed below in the order of most frequency to least frequency of responses pertaining to the category. Examples of responses provided by interview participants follow category titles.

What kinds of iconography might represent Appalachian culture stereotypes?

Material Landscape

handmade objects, moonshine, corn cob pipes, cornbread, overalls, shot guns, rock walls and fences, straw hats, brooms, weaving, laundry, gingham shirts

Building Structures

cabins, outhouses, barns, churches, corn crib

Social Traits

isolated, traditional, lazy, simple life, friendly

Environmental Landscapes

mountains, rivers

Caricatures

hillbilly, plenty of kids, mountain people, farmers, old people

Wildlife

bears, dogs, chicken, goats

Floral

dogwoods, wildflowers

APPENDIX D

Content Analysis

Gallery Paintings

A few examples of categories of types, one-word subjects, and simple subjects used to analyze the catalogue of paintings and prints in Mountainville galleries are listed below in the order of most frequency to least frequency of images depicted. Descriptions of painting contents follow category titles.

Type

One-word Subject

Simple Subject

Description of Painting Content

Buildings

Barn

Barn in Snow

Snow scene of gray board barn wit opened wire gate at corner end of a split rail fence, large pine tree at corner of gate, hint of driveway to the barn but no tracks in the snow

Barn Yard

Two gray wood barns, further one has red brick silo, green grass, horse grazing, rabbit by tree stump, yellow daffodils in foreground

Cabin

Cabin in Snow

Cabin in snowy night scene with full moon, mountains and trees in background, two raccoons and split rail fence in foreground

Cabin on Mountain

Gray cabin, hewn logs and mortar with smoke stack, small windows, door and porch, wooden rocking chair on porch, stone pavers path to door, rhododendron flanking cabin

Landscape

Mountain

Mountains with Mist

Clouds or mist with mountains peeking out in background, foreground has bare tree and shrubs, misty background with bare trees and branches in foreground

Mountain Trail

Trail through rocks and yellow orange leafed trees on top of mountain with more mountains in distance

River

River with Trees

Autumn river scene with bare birch trees and coniferous trees, yellow grass bank, blue mountain in background

Rocks and Stream

Rocks and stream with green moss

Appendix D, continued

Downtown Business Fronts

Categories of Images/Icons used to analyze the catalogue of observable images and wording in signs and storefront in downtown Mountainville are listed below in the order of most frequency to least frequency of responses pertaining to the category. Examples of observable icons and sign wordage follow category titles.

References to Pioneer Culture

Hillbilly, outhouse, potbelly stove, fort, mine, Davy Crockett, peddler, trading post, water mill, white clapboard church, copper kettle, quilts, log facade

References to Nature

black bear, maple leaf, raccoons, tree acorn

References to Nearby Mountains

ole smokey, smokeyland, leconte view, mountain mall, ranger

References to the Past

memories, old tyme, nostalgia, history of oak flats

Reference to Native American Culture

Native American crafts, Cherokee

References to Europe

Bavarian gables, Victorian costumes

References to Southern Culture

Dixie, Crawdaddy's, Confederate flag

APPENDIX E

Surveys

In addition to surveys conducted at galleries, I conducted surveys at an art and craft fair that occurs twice during the year. The Mountainville Craftsman's Fair runs during the last ten days in July and eighteen days in mid-October in the Mountainville Convention Center. For the July and October Fairs, I set up my survey table for five days each. Of the ten total days, I conducted surveys on three Saturdays, three Fridays, two Thursdays, one Sunday, and one Monday. Operating in the same manner as I did at the smaller galleries, I collected 374 completed surveys from the fairs. The Mountainville Craftsman's Fair attracts an estimated 2,200 people per day with a daily attendance ranging 1900- 3900 people per day, and the October fair does draw more visitors than the July fair. However, my survey return rate was low due to the layout of the fair. The convention center had two exits which split the consumer population of the fair. Moreover, fair visitors tended to exit in waves which prevented me from being seen by potential participants as well as asking each exiting visitor to complete the questionnaire. Due to the time constraints of this research's analysis time line and to statistical insignificance, the survey data from the festival is not incorporated in this research.

Appendix E, continued

Gallery Visitor Survey:

The first part of this questionnaire asks for your preference in purchasing art/craft.

1. Did you purchase any original paintings or prints of paintings today?

☐ No

Please list your reasons for deciding to not purchase a painting or print?

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

☐ Yes

Which painting did you purchase? _____

What is the subject of the painting? _____

Who is the artist of the painting? _____

What is the cost of the painting you purchased? _____

What about this painting appeals to you? _____

Please list your reasons for deciding to buy the painting:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

2. How did you hear about this Gallery?

☐ Friend/Word of Mouth

☐ TV/Radio Advertising

☐ Visitor/ Welcome Center

Are you a repeat customer?

☐ Internet

☐ Mailing

☐ Brochure

☐ Yes

☐ Newspaper

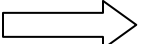
☐ Other: _____

☐ No

3. Please list your reasons for choosing the Mountainville area as your travel destination.

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Survey continues 

Appendix E, Gallery Visitor Survey, continued:

The second part of this questionnaire asks about your perceptions of Appalachia.

4. Please list what you associate with or know about people living in Appalachia?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

5. Do you identify yourself or your family as Appalachian? Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure ☐

6. Please list any encounters with Appalachian people or Appalachian culture you may have had during your stay here in Mountainville?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

The last part of this questionnaire asks about your demographics.

7. Where are you from? city and state: _____

How long is your visit? _____ How many in your party? _____

8. What is your approximate annual income?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,001 to \$60,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,001 to \$120,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,001 to \$20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,001 to \$70,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$120,001 to \$150,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,001 to \$30,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000 to \$80,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150,001 to \$175,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,001 to \$40,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,001 to \$90,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$175,001 to \$200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,001 to \$50,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$90,001 to \$100,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> over \$200,001 |

Your occupation? _____ Are you retired? Yes ☐ No ☐

Your age? _____ Your ethnic identity? _____

Your gender? ☐ Female ☐ Male Your highest level of education? _____

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix E, continued
Gallery Performance Survey

GALLERY	LOCATION	# VISITORS WINTER	# VISITORS SPRING	# VISITORS SUMMER	# VISITORS AUTUMN	TOTAL VISITORS	YEARLY VOLUME OF SALES	BEST DAY	BEST MONTH
1	COUNTY ART&CRAFT	0	1	3	5	9	\$9,000	\$600	NOVEMBER
2	COMMUNITY	2	4	100	120	226	\$30,000	\$1,100	SEPTEMBER
3	DOWNTOWN	10	50	150	100	310	\$62,000	1,000	JUNE & OCTOBER
4	DOWNTOWN	20		200		220	\$87,000	\$1,500	ANYTIME
5	DOWNTOWN ART&CRAFT	9/HOUR				NA	\$125,000	NA	JULY
6	COMMUNITY ART&CRAFT	10	25	40	50	125	\$175,000	\$1,800	APRIL
7	COMMUNITY	2	7	44	22	75	\$325,000	\$16,000	JULY
8	DOWNTOWN ART&CRAFT	0	100	150	200	450	\$398,000	\$14,500	AUGUST
9	COMMUNITY ROCKY					NA	\$500,000	NA	NA
10	RIVER	75	100	200	200	575	\$600,000	\$7,800	OCTOBER

Appendix E, continued

Gallery Performance Assessment

- The purpose of this questionnaire is to measure the volume of sales reached by gallery businesses in 2005.
- The information provided here will be kept anonymous and in confidence by the researcher, Kristin Kant of the Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky.
- This information will not be shared with any persons, institutions, and or other parties.
- This information will be used to assess the range and overall performance of the local arts and crafts industry in the Mountainville area.

1. Please estimate this business's average number of visitors per day during:

(Winter) January-March 2005 _____

(Spring) April-June 2005 _____

(Summer) July-September 2005 _____

(Autumn) October-December 2005 _____

2. Please approximate the average volume of gallery sales for the year 2005:

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150,001-\$200,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$400,001-\$450,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10,001-\$50,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200,001-\$250,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$450,001-\$500,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,001-\$75,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250,001-\$300,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500,001-\$550,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$75,001-\$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300,001-\$350,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$550,001-\$600,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,001-\$150,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$350,001-\$400,000	<input type="checkbox"/> over \$600,001

3. Please approximate the amount of your best day in sales \$ _____;

in what month of 2005 did this occur _____?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

APPENDIX F

Applications of this Research

This appendix offers some points of application useful to the community of artists and their patrons who may be concerned with issues of authenticity and quality in Mountainville's tourism industry. Though my purpose in this ethnographic research is not to be didactic, my findings are useful in three particular points of application. It would be omissive to not address how artists, tourists, and the Mountainville community might be served by this project. For artists, this research clarifies the cultural logic informing tourists' expectations of their experience with art. Delineating class-based values for art, this project encourages artists to provide more educational component to their galleries, thereby, developing public appreciation for art. Additionally, a stringent application of this research may be used by artists to produce art that matches cultural stereotypes held by tourists. Generating sales, this application does nothing to advance levels of cultural perceptions to deeper understanding. Regarding economic activities, the attention this project gives to sales tactics beyond traditional marketing may be of use to artists. Broadening one's scope of attracting, interacting, performing, and facilitating sales may help to minimize economic risk and develop business base.

This project also contributes to artists the opportunity to be reflexive about art production. Reflexivity in art production allows for artistic freedom from market constraints. This project has shown how some artists feel compelled to producing what tourists want. Acknowledging where one's motivation comes from may enable artists to tap into new sources of motivation and produce other forms, styles, and content of art that the market might support.

For tourists, this project points out stereotypes and their exaggerations of the Appalachian region and culture. Expanding understanding of tourists' Appalachian experience derives from critical perspectives applied to the sights, sounds, and encounters that constitute a vacation. Fueling this project is the hope that cultural misconceptions are critiqued and corrected by new waves of tourists who choose vacations based on opportunities to learn and experience.

Finally, this project makes application to the development of Mountainville's tourism industry. Broadened notions of the lived experience in the local community enable diversification in marketing strategies. If Mountainville, in a community-wide effort, expands the representation of the local, then new populations of tourists may consider Mountainville as a viable and interesting place to visit. For example, the history of Mountainville includes advances in the use of technology in engineering and biology. These advances are exhibited in the national park's biosphere and in Mountainville's home construction and water treatment plant. There are also Mountainville residents who have propagated cultural change through leftist thinking, and relocation policies, put in place when the national park was established, provoked sites of resistance from residents who were forced to move. These suppressed elements of Mountainville's local character may attract tourists who find such topics more appealing than the homogenized version of America's pioneering past.

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"Consumer Goods as Dialogue About Development," *Culture and History* 7:79-100.

Wilk, Richard and Lisa Cliggett. 2007
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“Ethnicity and Psychocultural Models,” in Cultural Diversity in the United States: A Critical Reader. Edited by Ida Susser and Thomas Patterson. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers. pp 281-301.
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Economics: Marxian Versus Neoclassical. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

VITA

Kristin Mary Agnes Helen Kant
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EDUCATION

M.A., ANTHROPOLOGY

AUGUST 1997- JANUARY 2001

Temple University

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Advisors: Dr. Thomas C. Patterson, Dr. Susan B. Hyatt

Master's Thesis: Painting the Mountains: an Investigation of the Impact of Tourism on the Art and Culture of Appalachia and on the Conceptualization of Appalachian Culture

B.A., INTERNATIONAL STUDIES/ POLITICAL SCIENCE,
MINOR IN ART

AUGUST 1992- MAY 1996

Maryville College

Maryville, Tennessee

Advisor: Dr. Young-Bae Kim

Senior Thesis: Cultural Awareness Levels in an American Population: a Report of Senior Thesis

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

MARCH 2007-JULY 2008

University of Kentucky

Lexington, Kentucky

Department of Education Policy and Evaluation Studies

Partnership in Context: National Science Foundation Grant

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

AUGUST 2002- AUGUST 2004

University of Kentucky

Lexington, Kentucky

Department of Education Policy and Evaluation Studies

Kentucky Department of Adult Education (granting agency)

HONORS AND AWARDS

GRADUATE HONORS

Appalachian Studies Association: Carl Ross Student Paper Competition Award 2008
Society for the Anthropology of North America: St. Clair Drake Award 2007
Francisco Art Festival/ Citizens Create!/ National City Bank: Public Art Project 2007
Lambda Alpha Anthropology Honor Society 2002

UNDERGRADUATE HONORS

Outstanding Senior Award 1996
Political Science Award 1996
Religious Life Award 1996
Cum Laude
Presidential Scholar (full tuition merit award)
Bonner Scholar (community service scholarship)
Alpha Lambda Delta (freshman honor society)
Delta Omicron pledge (music honor society)
Pi Gamma Mu (social science honor society)

GRANTS RECEIVED

James S. Brown Award for Graduate Research in Appalachia- May 2005
University of Kentucky Graduate School Conference Travel Grants- Spring 2002-2009

PUBLICATIONS

Kant, Kristin. 2008

“The Observation Exercise: Practicing Observation Skills and Using Your Senses,” in Strategies for Teaching Anthropology. Edited by Patricia Rice and David McCurdy. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Kant, Kristin. 2005

Book Review of Ecotourism in Appalachia: Marketing the Mountains. By Al Fritsch and Kristin Johannsen. Appalachian Journal: A Regional Studies Review vol 32, no 4:486-489.

Goldstein, Beth L., with Kristin Kant, Sherry Powers, Jim Berger. 2004

“Kentucky Adult Educators Literacy Institute 2003-04 Evaluation Report,”
Kentucky Department of Adult Education, Council of Post-Secondary Education.

Goldstein, Beth L., Kristin Kant. 2003

with JoAnna Dickey, Paul Erickson, Sherry Powers, Jim Berger.

“Kentucky Adult Educators Literacy Institute 2002-03 Evaluation Report,”
Kentucky Department of Adult Education, Council of Post-Secondary Education.

PRESENTATIONS

PAPERS

Kant, Kristin, Beth Goldstein, Jeff Bieber, Karen Carey, Kathryn Shirley. March 29, 2009

“I Have to Help My School, Because It Helped Me: The Enculturation of Participation in Community-School Partnerships,” Thirty-Second Appalachian Studies Conference, Portsmouth, Ohio.

Carey, Karen, Kathryn Shirley, Beth Goldstein, Jeff Bieber, Kristin Kant. May 31, 2008

“A Clearer View: Using Social Network Analysis in Institutional Research,” Association of Institutional Research 48th Annual Forum, Seattle, Washington.

Kant, Kristin. March 28, 2008

“Artists Minimizing Economic Uncertainty Through Cultural Commodification Strategies and Performances,” Thirty-First Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Huntington, West Virginia.

Kant, Kristin. November 28, 2007

“Painting the Mountains: A Look at the Functions of Cultural Icons in an Appalachian Tourist Town,” American Anthropological Association 106th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Kant, Kristin. April 13, 2007

“Functions of Cultural Icons in U.S. Regional Tourist Art: An Anthropological Investigation of Tourism in Appalachia,” University of Kentucky Graduate Student Interdisciplinary Conference, Lexington, Kentucky.

Kant, Kristin. March 23, 2007

“Functions (Use and Meaning) of Cultural Icons in a Local Appalachian Tourist Town,” Thirtieth Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Maryville, Tennessee.

Kant, Kristin. November 29, 2006

“Connections Between Artists and Tourists: What Happens Before, During, and After the Sale,” Interdisciplinary Group for Development Studies, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.

Kant, Kristin with Sara Bennett and Jeff Gotcher. June 4, 2005

“Report of Human Diversity Inventory: An Ethnographic Student Course Project,” Just Connections Conference, Maryville, Tennessee.

Kant, Kristin. March 19, 2005

“Insiders and Outsiders: Tourism in Southern Appalachia,” Twenty-Eighth Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Radford, Virginia.

Kant, Kristin. November 19, 2003

“Post-Modernists Should Listen To This: Suggesting New Directions for a Post-Modern Approach to Appalachian Culture and the Consumption of Tourism Stereotypes,” American Anthropological Association 102nd Annual Meeting, Chicago.

Kant, Kristin. March 28, 2003

“Post-Modernists Should Listen To This: Suggesting New Directions for a Post-Modern Approach to Appalachian Studies,” Twenty-Six Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Richmond, Kentucky.

Kant, Kristin. November 24, 2002.

“Cultural Heritage Tourism Sites in Appalachia,” American Anthropological Association 103rd Annual Meeting, New Orleans.

Kant, Kristin. March 15-17, 2002

“Cultural Heritage Tourism: An Anthropological Critique,” Twenty-Fifth Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Helen, Georgia.

Kant, Kristin. March 30–April 1, 2001

“Painting the Mountains: What Tourist Art Has Done Towards a Conceptualization of Appalachian Culture,” Twenty-Fourth Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Snowshoe, West Virginia.

Kant, Kristin. April 1, 2000

“Painting the Mountains: an Investigation of the Impact of Tourism on the Art of Appalachia,” Schuylkill Graduate Conference, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

POSTER SESSIONS

Kant, Kristin. March 27-28, 2009

“Conducting Research with ARTists and ARTifacts: Ethnographic Methods Used to Conduct Field Research on Paintings Produced and Consumed in an Appalachian Tourist Destination,” Thirty-Second Appalachian Studies Conference, Portsmouth, Ohio.

Kant, Kristin. June 16-17, 2007

“The Human Value of Art: Art as an Evolutionary Tool,” Francisco’s Farm Arts Festival at Midway College, Midway, Kentucky.

Kant, Kristin. March 30, 2007

“Painting the Mountains: An Investigation of the Impact of Tourism on Art Production and Consumption of Appalachia,” First Annual Tourism Research Poster Competition, Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Meetings, Tampa, Florida.

Kant, Kristin. March 18, 2006

“Connections Between Artists and Tourists: What Happens Before, During, and After the Sale,” Twenty-Ninth Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Dayton, Ohio.

Kant, Kristin. March 26-28, 2004

“Do All These Paintings Look Alike? A Poster Presentation of a Dissertation Research Project Proposal,” Twenty-Seventh Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Cherokee, North Carolina.

Kant, Kristin. March 15-17, 2002

“Photographing the Mountains: This is My Real Appalachia, This is My Imagined Appalachia,” Twenty-Fifth Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Helen, Georgia.

Kant, Kristin. March 30–April 1, 2001

“Painting the Mountains: An Anthropologist’s Interpretation of Artists’ Interpretations of Appalachian Culture,” Twenty-Fourth Annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Snowshoe, West Virginia.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

TEACHING ASSISTANT/ INSTRUCTOR
University of Kentucky

AUGUST 2005- DECEMBER 2006
Lexington, Kentucky

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR
Maryville College

AUGUST 2004- AUGUST 2005
Maryville, Tennessee

INSTRUCTOR
University of Kentucky

JUNE 2002- AUGUST 2003
Lexington, Kentucky

INSTRUCTOR
Temple University

MAY 1999-JULY 2001
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

INSTRUCTOR
Drexel University

MARCH 2001- JUNE 2001
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

GRADUATE

American Anthropological Association
National Anthropology Students Association
Society for the Anthropology of North America
Society for Visual Anthropology
Society for Applied Anthropology
Appalachian Studies Association
University of Kentucky Anthropology Graduate Student Association
Global Studies Association Conference -May 13-15, 2005, Knoxville, Tennessee
Temple University Anthropology Graduate Student Association
Graduate Association for Visual Anthropology
Temple University Department of Anthropology Mentor Program

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION OFFICES HELD

Appalachian Studies Association
 -Finance and Development Committee Chair, September 2005-present
 -Steering Committee, March 2004- present

University of Kentucky Graduate School Council
 -Voting Student Member, August 2003- May 2004

University of Kentucky Anthropology Graduate Student Association
 -President, May 2002- May 2003
 -Vice- President, May 2003- May 2004

Temple University Department of Anthropology Mentor Program
 -Program Chair 1999, 2000

CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

University of Kentucky Graduate Student Orientation
 - August 2002, Lexington, Kentucky
 -August 2003, Lexington, Kentucky

Future for Anthropology of Visual Communication Conference
 -December 1998, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia